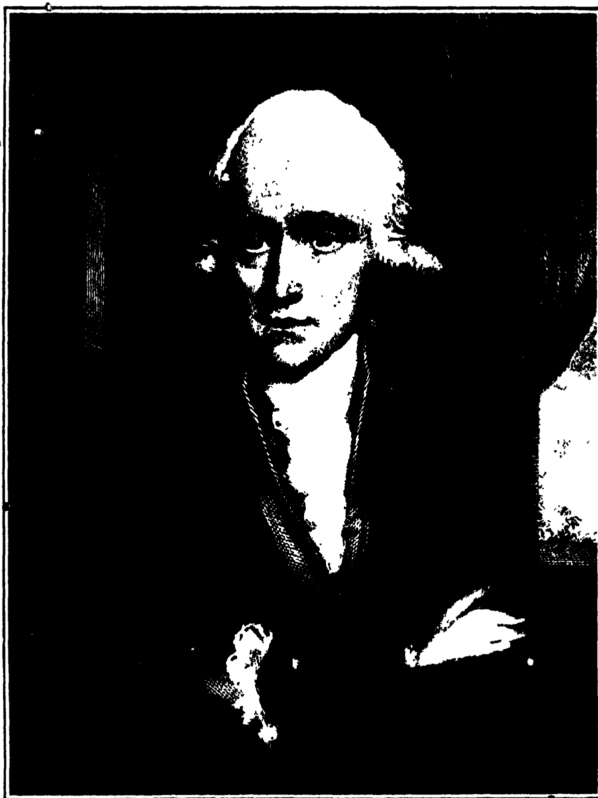


MINIATURE PORTRAIT OF WARREN HASTINGS

By Ozias Humphry. Considered by his wife the best likeness.)

Frontispiece.

A VINDICATION

OF

WARREN HASTINGS

BY

G. W. HASTINGS



HENRY FROWDE
LONDON, EDINBURGH, GLASGOW
NEW YORK, TORONTO AND MELBOURNE

1909

OXFORD: HORACE HART
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY



PREFACE

THE simple object of this book is to exhibit as clearly as may be, and therefore without prejudice or passion, in language that may be understood of all, the proofs, contained in three volumes of *State Papers*, edited by Mr. G. E. Forrest, and published by order of the Indian Government, that Warren Hastings, the man who made our Indian Empire and preserved it for the Crown, was wholly innocent of the crimes so often and so grievously laid to his charge.

Some of these proofs have already been given to the public (notably by Sir John Strachey in his admirable volume on the Rohilla War[1]), but in disconnected form, and in some cases imperfectly. A full light has been thrown on the whole history of the case by the labours of Mr. Forrest, and there is no excuse now for evading the discussion of any part of the subject.

This book, professedly founded on the volumes above referred to, deals with six principal heads of accusation made by various speakers and writers, and it is confidently submitted that in no single case can a verdict of guilty be maintained, in the face of present knowledge, against the 'Great Accused'. If this be so, it is surely time that the truth should be openly and generously acknowledged, and the injustice of past generations be done away.

[1] *Hastings and the Rohilla War*, by Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I.

No attempt at personal biography is attempted here. There have been several efforts in that direction, but the results have not been encouraging. They have been rather beacons to warn, than lights to illumine. Gleig's *Memoirs* are valuable, but can hardly be called interesting. It is strange how little he made of a great subject; and judging by his preface he was himself conscious of the failure. He was rudely attacked by Macaulay, though it is demonstrable that as to more than one historical event Gleig was right and his supercilious critic wrong. Yet it is true that if Gleig had written in the days of the *Dunciad* he would inevitably have been enrolled among the minions of the dull goddess.

Sir Alfred Lyall, to whose pages a respectful obligation is here expressed, committed himself, or rather was misled by others, to the grotesque legend that Warren Hastings was the son of a boy of sixteen, mated to a maiden equally immature. It is hoped that the chapter on Daylesford in this book will dispose once for all of an absurdity, for which Gleig, in his *Memoirs*, is primarily responsible. It is much more a subject for regret that Sir Alfred Lyall has treated some of the historical questions in his biography in an unsatisfactory way, not so much by direct condemnation as by leaving them in critical doubt, when such writers as Sir John Strachey and Sir James Stephen do not hesitate as to a decisive acquittal.

Sir Charles Lawson has contrived to import into his somewhat mixed narrative a variety of observations, interesting in their way, which may suggest a doubt whether he saw much of Daylesford, or had any trustworthy information from the Hastings family. He has not retailed the story current among North Oxfordshire peasants that Warren Hastings bought his second wife for her exact weight in gold; but if he had done so, it

would have been quite as true as some of the facts stated. As, for instance, that Simon Hastings was buried in Daylesford church, or that the estate was sold in 1853 to a Mr. Byass, or that Sir James Stephen was a Judge at Calcutta. These are only samples. In fact, a demon of error seems to haunt every attempt at a Life of Warren Hastings.

Warned by the fate of others, the author of the present book has preferred to deal with proof rather than with conjecture. Perhaps he knows a little more than some who have written confidently, and he believes that the best tribute to the illustrious dead is to preserve a sacred silence on some domestic matters, while vindicating, to the best of a small ability, the public fame of an historic statesman.

It is not without some claim, inherited and personal, that the author ventures to speak. His grandfather was present in Westminster Hall at the Impeachment, heard the speeches of Burke and Sheridan, and described them in his latest years to a listener who remembers still. His father stood in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford when Warren Hastings received the degree of D.C.L. at the hands of the University, and lived to refer to that occasion forty years after, when he himself was honoured with a similar compliment. And lastly, the author is one of the very few now living who knew Daylesford House, outside and in, as it had been when Warren Hastings was there, preserved scrupulously in the exact state by Sir Charles and Lady Imhoff, then its custodians, to whose personal kindness, after long lapse of time, he refers with not unemotional regard.

Many changes, since that epoch, have passed over Daylesford. Other times, other men. Save for a simple urn, marked with an immortal name, the place has become,

or is becoming, unhistorical. But that is local only. The fame of Warren Hastings does not moulder with his ashes. It will live while the English tongue endures; and it may be that something has been done herein to clear that fame alike from the inventions of malice and the delusions of error.

NOTICE TO READERS

The References in the Notes are:—

State Papers means Selections from the Letters, Dispatches, and other State Papers preserved in the Foreign Department of the Government of India, 1772–85, edited by George W. Forrest, B.A., in Three Volumes.

Lyall means *Warren Hastings*, by Sir Alfred Lyall.

Gleig means *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, by Gleig, in Three Volumes.

Stephen means *The Story of Nuncoomar*, by Sir James Stephen.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

WARREN HASTINGS
A VINDICATION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

SOON after the close of the Russo-Japanese war there appeared in one of our newspapers a letter from a young Japanese, speaking of the advantages he had derived from his education in England. He dwelt with discrimination on English literature. Incidentally he mentioned the *Essays* of Macaulay, which he, like thousands of others, had read with delight, and, as he believed, with instruction. Prominently among these literary efforts he praised that on Warren Hastings, which he obviously regarded as a valuable contribution to history. In his view it was not only brilliant and interesting; it was all true. The illustrious Englishman with whom the Essay deals had committed great crimes, and had only escaped conviction because his judges, the Peers of Great Britain, had become weary of his prolonged trial. Could any other conclusion be arrived at by an educated foreigner, reading that Essay without correction or commentary? To a country beyond 'furthest Ind' has thus been published the tale, as false as it is humiliating, that our Indian Empire, perhaps the most striking product of British valour and British statesmanship, was founded on oppression and iniquity.

Nor is it less lamentable that in our Colonies, and in that greatest outgrowth of our race, the United States of America, the same slander is perpetuated. Generations

have been, and are being, brought up in the belief that Warren Hastings somehow deserved the obloquy which orators and writers have heaped upon him; or if he did not deserve it all, at least, on the old principle that where there is much smoke there must be some fire, he had earned a good share of it. We hear much of imperialism in the present day, and much also of the friendly relations between Americans and ourselves, but it may be well to consider what sort of imperial honour it is in ourselves, and what sort of international friendship it is in others, which traduces, or suffers to be traduced, the memory of one of the rare and historic men who have built up the world-wide glory of the English-speaking race.

Nor less at home is the evil permitted. There is not a school, whether for boys or for girls, where anything above primary instruction is given, that does not see every year the presentation of Macaulay's *Essays*, that on Warren Hastings conspicuous among them, as prizes to the pupils; who are taught thereby, in their most susceptible years, to think ill of the statesman who preserved India to their country's flag.[1]

It may of course be urged in defence by all concerned that there was no intentional sin in the matter; that they have met with no answer to the statements made in such

[1] As a further illustration of what is said above, an *Elementary History of England*, written by Cyril Ransome, an author of repute, in speaking of Warren Hastings, and praising him for 'his noble defence of British India against Hyder Ali', adds that nevertheless he had been 'guilty of great oppressions'. This charge is evidently made in complete confidence of its truth; but it is absolutely opposed to all the facts of the case. Mr. Ransome had probably read Macaulay's Essay, and nothing else. Certainly he had not read Strachey, or Stephen, and still less the *State Papers* issued by the Indian Government. But with one sweeping accusation he brands the name of Warren Hastings, in every school where his book may be read, with the commission of the worst crime which a ruler can commit; a crime of which he was acquitted, not only by the verdict of the Peers, but by the expressed gratitude of the people whom he is said to have injured.

charming prose by Macaulay; and that, as he praises Warren Hastings for some of his deeds, they naturally supposed that the essayist was right in blaming him for others. In truth the words, 'I wot that through ignorance ye did it,' may be as applicable to his detractors at the present day as they were to some of his opponents more than a hundred years since. The only wonder is that the hollowness of the accusations has not been more generally perceived. There never was a prosecution more unmerited; there never was one which broke down more conspicuously on the facts. But the general reader knows nothing, and thinks nothing, of such questions as these.

There was a formidable list of charges brought up to the Lords against Warren Hastings, and an amazing amount of rhetorical invective, not seldom rising to distortion of fact, was poured out in Westminster Hall. But the extraordinary feature of the Impeachment throughout was the absence of any real proof of guilt. There was abundant assertion, mixed frequently with abuse; evidence in support there was little or none. Let us take an instance and compare the assertion with the facts. Burke told the Lords that the government of Mr. Hastings had reduced the country under his rule to a jungle of wild beasts. Those were his words. Now if that, or anything like it, had been the case, it is certain that testimony could have been brought to prove it. What is quite certain is that no single witness deposed to anything of the kind. The native evidence on the contrary was all in favour of Warren Hastings. Burke had the courage to tell the Lords that this evidence had been extorted, that the hands which had written the testimonials were yet warm with the thumbscrews which had been applied to them. The statement, of which proof was not even pretended, was preposterous. Warren Hastings said well in reply to it before his judges: 'It is very seldom that mankind are grateful enough to do even justice to a fallen minister; and I believe there never was an instance, in the annals of human nature, of

an injured people rising up voluntarily to bear false witness in favour of a distant and persecuted oppressor.' Burke, when he uttered such words, could only have meant that the extortion of testimonials in favour of the accused had been carried out by the Indian Government, for none else would have had the power to do it; but the character of Lord Cornwallis, then Governor-General, one of the most high-minded of men, makes such an insinuation absurd.[1] The nature of these testimonials is worth considering. That from the inhabitants of Benares says: 'He laid the foundations of justice and the pillars of the law. In every shape we, the inhabitants of this country, during the time of his administration, lived in ease and peace. We are therefore greatly satisfied with and thankful to him. As the said Mr. Hastings was long acquainted with the modes of government in these regions, so the inmost purport of his heart was openly and secretly, indeed, bent upon those things which might maintain inviolate our religious persuasions, and guard us in even the minutest respect from misfortune and calamity. In every way he cherished us in honour and credit.'

The Pundits and other Brahmins of Benares also wrote: 'Whenever that man of vast reason, the Governor-General, Mr. Hastings, returned to this place, and people of all ranks were assembled, at that time he gladdened the heart of every one by his behaviour, which consisted of kind

[1] As a fact, when Lord Cornwallis was informed that the natives of India were desirous of bearing testimony to the merits of Warren Hastings, and were requesting permission that the officers of Government might have authority to transmit such testimonials to the Governor-General in Council, he caused a cautious letter to be circulated among all the Collectors and Residents which stated: 'With this request the Governor-General in Council has been pleased to comply, and I have therefore to inform you, that should any such address be tendered to you, you are at liberty to receive and forward it to me. The liberty now accorded is merely to receive and transmit testimonials when voluntarily offered; and you are not to deduce any inference from it that you are authorised to exercise any further interference in this business.'—*State Papers*, Introd., p. xcviii.

wishes and agreeable conversation, expressions of compassion for the distressed, acts of politeness, and a readiness to relieve and protect every one without distinction. To please us dull people, he caused a spacious music gallery to be built, at his own expense, over the gateway of the temple of Veesmaswar, which is esteemed the head jewel of all places of holy visitation. He never at any time, nor on any occasion, either by neglecting to promote the happiness of the people, or by looking with the eye of covetousness, displayed an inclination to distress any individual whatsoever.'

The inhabitants of Murshedabad also bore witness that 'the whole period of Mr. Hastings' residence in this country exhibited his good conduct towards the inhabitants. No oppression nor tyranny was admitted over any one. He observed the rules of respect and attention to ancient families. He did not omit the performances of the duties of politeness and civility towards all men of rank and station when an interview took place with them. In affairs concerning the government and revenues, he was not covetous of other men's money and property; he was not open to bribery. He restricted the farmers and officers in their oppressions in a manner that prevented them from exercising that tyranny which motives of self-interest and private gain might instigate them to observe towards the ryots and helpless. He used great exertions to cultivate the country, to increase the agriculture and the revenues without deceit and with perfect propriety and rectitude. He respected the learned and wise men, and in order for the propagation of learning he built a college, and endowed it with a provision for the maintenance of the students, insomuch that thousands reaping the benefits thereof offer up their prayers for the prosperity of England, and for the success of the Company.'[1]

Mr. Forrest says that quotations of a similar nature from other addresses might be multiplied to any extent.

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcix.

But he also says that these are not the only evidence of the honour and esteem in which Warren Hastings was held by the natives of India. A Brahmin pilgrim on the banks of the Nerbudda declared that 'he had lived under many different governments and travelled in many countries, but had never witnessed a general diffusion of happiness equal to that of the natives under the mild and equitable administration of Mr. Hastings'. This anecdote is to be found in Forbes' *Oriental Memoirs*, and the author adds: 'I cannot forget the words of this respectable pilgrim; we were near a banian tree in the Darbar court, when he thus concluded his discourse: "as the burr-tree, one of the noblest productions in nature, by extending its branches for the comfort and refreshment of all who seek its shelter, is emblematical of the Deity, so do the virtues of the Governor resemble the burr-tree; he extends his providence to the remotest districts, and stretches out his arms far and wide to afford protection and happiness to his people; such, Sahib, is Mr. Hastings."'

This testimony came from the country which, according to Burke, had been made a jungle of wild beasts. He attempted to discredit the testimony by saying it had been extorted by thumbscrews. But it was corroborated by Englishmen of high position and repute. Lord Cornwallis, in his evidence before the House of Lords, stated that Warren Hastings was much esteemed by the natives; and Sir John Shore (afterwards Lord Teignmouth), 'a man,' said Macaulay, 'of whose integrity, humanity and honour it is impossible to speak too highly,' deposed to the same effect. Let the reader consider this, and say at what value he is disposed to assess the statements made at the Impeachment.

But there is much more to consider. The excuses for attaching any weight to such statements, excuses which may have been plausibly urged at a former time, are sustainable no longer. Evidence plain and irrefutable, evidence which cannot lie, evidence which it is vain to contradict, impossible

to shake, has come to light by the publication, under the orders of the Indian Government, of the State Papers in the Foreign Department of the Government of India, from 1772 to 1785.

'The object of these volumes,' says Mr. Forrest, 'is to trace, by means of the records deposited in the Foreign Department, the history of our Indian Empire from 1772, the year when Warren Hastings became Governor of Bengal, to February 1, 1785, the day on which he resigned the office of Governor-General. The story of the administration of Warren Hastings—one of the most important periods in the history of our Empire—is told by the letters and narratives, the dissents and discussions of the chief actors. These have been printed letter by letter exactly as they were entered day by day in the Secret Proceedings of the Select Committee of Council. These Proceedings contain, as Sir James Stephen[1] remarks, the most interesting, authentic, and curious collection of State Papers in the world. The government of the Company, as Burke pointed out, was a government of writing, a government of record, and they contrived that every proceeding in public council should be written—no debate merely verbal. By the study of the proposition, the argument, the dissent, the historical student is now enabled to form an independent judgment of events, and still more of the actors and their motives. In the case of Hastings and his administration, the world has not been sufficiently careful to test motives and actions, and has accepted without challenge the verdict of unscrupulous opponents and political partisans. The exaggerated charges of Burke against Hastings have left a stain not only on the character of the man who founded our Empire, but on the nation whose minister he was. To the eloquence of Burke was first due the impression that our Indian

[1] Better known as Sir James FitzJames Stephen, Member of the Legislative Council at Calcutta, and subsequently a Judge of the High Court of Justice in England.

dominion was founded by enormous crimes. This view was strengthened by the history of Mill,[1] whose "excessive dryness and severity of style", to use the words of Sir James Stephen, "produce an impression of accuracy and labour which a study of original authorities does not confirm." Macaulay unfortunately accepted the statements of Mill without examination, and by his matchless style gave them wide circulation. The time has however come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments passed on Hastings and his work should be carefully revised by history, and the present volumes contain all the authentic documents necessary for the purposes of history.'[2]

There are also to be found in these records other matters of deep interest to the English people. Mr. Forrest mentions the dispatches of Sir Eyre Coote and of Sir Edward Hughes, men whose deeds ought to live in the memory of their countrymen, who carried out in stern fight by land and sea the patriotic policy of Warren Hastings. Of hardly less interest is the fierce literary contest between the Governor-General and his bitter opponent, Philip Francis, each a master of the pen, each worthy to rank with our best writers in clearness of expression and vigour of style; though Francis was once compelled to admit, author as he almost certainly had been of the most trenchant letters ever written in our language, that 'there was no contending against the pen of Hastings'.[3] On these points, as on a multitude of others, the three volumes of *State Papers* are a treasure-house of information, personal, historical, and political, and it is on their authority that the ensuing chapters of this book have been written.

It is certainly much to be regretted that Macaulay, splendidly gifted as he was with the faculty of composition, did not take more precautions in the verifying of his authorities. The observation may or may not be applicable

[1] James Mill's *History of India*.
[2] See Preface to *State Papers*, Vol. I. [3] See Essay.

to many of his historical writings, but it is lamentably true concerning his Essay on Warren Hastings. A very little inquiry when Macaulay held office at Calcutta[1] would have averted many errors. Nor is it unreasonable to suppose that his historical mind, peculiarly sensitive to greatness in character and action, would have delighted to clear the fame of such a man as Warren Hastings from the tales which had been invented by malignity and partisanship. How much he admired 'the illustrious accused' is proved by the letter which he wrote to Jeffery, then Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, at the time, as we suppose, when he contributed the Essay to its pages. This letter is extant, and speaks of Warren Hastings as one of the greatest, and possibly even the greatest, Englishman of the eighteenth century.

It is also noticeable that there is a curious inconsistency in the tone of the Essay itself. If it were indeed true, as its readers are asked to believe, that Warren Hastings committed great political crimes, that he wilfully handed over an innocent people to destruction, nay more, to atrocities of the worst kind, in order to secure some half million of money for the treasury at Calcutta; that he suborned a prosecution against, and hunted to death, a man who was an inconvenient accuser of himself; that he despoiled two sovereign rulers for no other reason than that his government wanted money, and robbed two helpless ladies for the same object; why, nothing could make any intelligent person doubt that Warren Hastings was both a cruel and a wicked man. Yet while the reader is told all this, he is also asked to believe that Warren Hastings was a great and enlightened ruler, that he effected vast improvements both in legislation and finance, promoting the welfare of those he governed; and that they, whether English or native, owned his beneficence, and repaid him with affection and trust. The description contradicts itself.

[1] Or, it may be added, a more careful reading of the book (Gleig's *Memoirs*) which he was reviewing.

It may safely be asserted that no such man ever lived. If Warren Hastings had been the villain that Francis, Mill, and Burke portrayed in their speeches and writings, in statements which were largely adopted, without inquiry, by Macaulay, the Governor-General could never have been the great statesman in war and peace, the incomparable administrator and legislator, whom the Essayist, in a burst of irrepressible admiration, so eloquently describes.

It would rather seem as if Macaulay, when starting on his Essay, was filled with a prejudice engendered in his mind by hostile writers, and was quite convinced that Warren Hastings ought to be condemned; but that as he went on with his subject the real truth more and more broke in upon him, that he realized the greatness of the man, that he perceived the falsity of the more sordid charges against him, while the immense services rendered to British India dominated an imagination naturally appreciative of high deeds. Nevertheless he could not wholly clear his mind of the original impression, and must needs hark back at the end to declare of Warren Hastings that 'in the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, he was deficient. His principles were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard.' Yet the Essay closes with a few lines of noble eulogy, expressed with rare taste.

Now there is one period in the public life of Warren Hastings which is little known even to many students, but which throws a clear light on his character and habit of thought. There is no record of it in the volumes which supply the chief material for these pages, but it may be fitting to allude to it here. We mean the short period during which he served as a Member of Council at Calcutta before his first return to England. He seems to have been appointed on the Council in recognition of the valuable services he had rendered at Patna as agent for the Company to the then Nawab, the governing prince of Bengal. Every

mention made of his conduct is in his favour, for every mention of it shows that his hands were clean in a time of exceptional corruption, and that his efforts were always directed to protect the natives from oppression, and to check abuses. In Sir Alfred Lyall's narrative of this period there is much to command attention. He tells how Warren Hastings was dispatched anew to Patna to inquire into the violent disputes that had arisen between the native government and the English factories; and speaks of the fairness of his reports, which gave an impartial account of the misconduct on both sides, showing that the Nawab's discontent and the country's troubles were largely attributable to the high-handed rapacity of persons trading or plundering under the Company's flag or uniform. In a letter which he wrote to the Governor in 1762 he protested vigorously against the abuses that he found prevailing: 'I beg leave to lay before you a grievance which calls loudly for redress. I mean the oppressions committed under sanction of the English name, and through want of spirit in the nabob's subjects to oppose them. This evil, I am well assured, is not confined to our dependants alone, but is practised all over the country by people assuming the habits of our sepoys and calling themselves gomastahs.[1] As on such occasions the great power of the English intimidates the people from resistance, so, on the other hand, the indolence of the Bengalee, or the difficulty of gaining access to those who can do them justice, prevents our having knowledge of the oppressions, and encourages their continuance, to the great, though unmerited, scandal of our government.'[2]

At that time, however, it was impossible to obtain any amendment. The Governor (Vansittart) and Warren Hastings, between them, settled with the Nawab a scheme for ending these malpractices and placing the whole inland trade upon an equal footing; but this roused a furious opposition from the majority of the Council, who passed

[1] Agents. [2] Lyall, p. 15.

resolutions upholding their factories in resistance to the Nawab's revenue officers. Warren Hastings steadily supported the Governor in opposing these resolutions; and on one occasion he voted alone against them, contending with all his strength for honest dealing and free trade. He said: 'As I have formerly lived among the country people in a very inferior station, and at a time when we were subject to the most slavish dependence on the government, and have met with the greatest indulgence, and even respect, from zemindars and officers of government, I can with the greater confidence deny the justice of this opinion; and add further, from repeated experience, that if our people, instead of erecting themselves into lords and oppressors of the country, confine themselves to an honest and fair trade, they will be everywhere courted and respected.'[1]

Commenting on his conduct at this period, which came in the earlier years of his life, Sir Alfred Lyall says: 'It must be allowed that Warren Hastings had passed with credit and integrity through the most discreditable and corrupt period in the annals of the East India Company. In the midst of a general scramble for money he never stooped to gains that were sordid or dishonest; and at a time when most of the English were either intoxicated by power or infuriated by misfortune—demoralized by the cruelty and treachery which they saw around them—Hastings preserved, so far as can be known from contemporary record, a character for equity and moderation.'[2]

Does his conduct, then, at thirty years of age, when he was first raised to the higher duties of civil administration, show a want of respect for the rights of others, or of sympathy for the sufferings of others? Was he not, junior as he must then have been to all his colleagues on the Council, foremost in defending the oppressed, zealous in denouncing abuses and in maintaining the rights of the native population? Was this the character of a man likely to turn oppressor when raised to higher office?

[1] Lyall, p. 17. [2] Ibid., p. 19.

Nor can it be forbidden to add that the charge of want of sympathy with the suffering is strangely opposed to the witness of those who had the best opportunities of judging. The earnest testimony borne to the habitual kindness shown by Warren Hastings to all sufferers, as uttered more than sixty years ago by Lady Imhoff, then resident with her husband[1] at Daylesford, can never be forgotten by the writer. It was a sympathy, that gracious lady said, which extended to every living thing, and was remarkable in its tenderness.

A curious anecdote, corroborative of this testimony, is to be found in a book published two or three years after the death of Warren Hastings.[2] It narrates how a guest, at a country-house where Warren Hastings was also visiting, saw him one morning walking in the grounds, and observed that at a particular spot he seemed to have a difficulty in proceeding. He at last seemed to get on by standing on one foot, and taking pains to skip to the place where he planted the other. This manœuvre was executed more than once. The observer felt some curiosity as to what had happened, and shortly after Warren Hastings had passed he made his way to the spot, and found that a colony of ants had there been crossing the path. It was evident from the footmarks that Warren Hastings had taken the utmost pains to avoid setting foot on any of the ants and had succeeded in his purpose.

'Is it possible to suppose,' said the narrator, 'that a man so scrupulously careful of the lives of some insects could have been the tyrant and oppressor he has been described to the people placed under his rule?'

In considering the official career of Warren Hastings, and especially in making any estimate of its success, it should always be remembered that his position as Governor-General was very different from that of his successors. He

[1] General Sir Charles Imhoff, stepson of Warren Hastings.

[2] Chambers' *Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire*, 1821, p. 493.

was not master in his own Council. He was constantly thwarted in his policy. Some of his highest designs were blasted in their birth. As he wrote, when reviewing his past administration: 'If the same act of the legislature which confirmed me in my station of President over the Company's settlements in Bengal had invested me with a control as extensive as the new denomination I received by it indicated; if it had compelled the assistance of my associates in power instead of giving me opponents; if, instead of creating new expectations, which were to be accomplished by my dismission from office, it had imposed silence on the interested clamours of faction, and taught the servants of the Company to place their dependence upon me, where it constitutionally rested; if, when it transferred the real control over the Company's affairs from the Direction to the Ministers, instead of extending, it had limited the claims of patronage, which every man possessing influence himself, or connected with those who possessed it, thought he had a right to exert; and if it had made my continuance in office to depend on the rectitude of my intentions and the vigour with which they were exerted, instead of annexing it to a compliance with those claims—I should have had little occasion at this period to claim the public indulgence for an avowal of duties undischarged. But the reverse took place in every instance.'[1]

One great design of his which remained unfulfilled was that of obtaining, by diplomatic arrangement with the Emperor, a paramount and immediate influence at the Court of Delhi, and thus using the ancient suzerain power in Hindustan to bind together all Indian rulers in pacific unity. His effort for this salutary end, fully worked out and prepared for by secret negotiation, was defeated by the refusal of the Council's consent.[2]

The mental distress caused to the Governor-General by

[1] Lyall, p. 55.
[2] See Gleig, Vol. III, p. 193; *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcv.

factious opposition to his policy may be seen in a letter which he wrote to Lord North, then Prime Minister: 'I now most earnestly entreat that your Lordship—for on you, I presume, it finally rests—will free me from the state I am in, either by my immediate recall, or by the confirmation of the trust and authority of which you have hitherto thought me deserving, on such a footing as shall enable me to fulfil your expectations, and to discharge the debt which I owe to your Lordship, to my country, and my Sovereign. The meanest drudge, who owes his daily subsistence to daily labour, enjoys a condition of happiness compared to mine, while I am doomed to share the responsibility of measures which I disapprove, and to be idle spectator of the ruin which I cannot avert.'[1]

Yet he did much to carry out his plan of uniting the different States of India in a peaceful relationship to English rule; and when he concluded a friendly treaty with Scindia (the first and most statesmanlike of Mahratta Chiefs), and through him with the Mahratta Confederacy, he was able to inform the Board: 'It is in some degree foreign to the present subject, yet I cannot refrain from imparting to you the pleasing satisfaction which I myself feel in observing the great and evident change that has within these few years taken place with regard to our Government in the opinions and dispositions of the principal powers of Hindustan. We seem now to have regained our proper weight in the political system, and the neighbouring States, who formerly shrunk from our advances, are eager to participate in our views, and to connect their interests with ours.'[2]

'The great change,' says Mr. Forrest, 'that had taken place, was due to the courage and statesmanship of Hastings. Menaced by foes on all sides, ill-supported by his masters, surrounded by colleagues who thwarted, embarrassed, and intrigued against him, he contrived by his individual energies to raise the Company from being a body of merchants and adventurers into the most powerful State in the politics of

[1] Lyall, p. 72. [2] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 105.

India. Englishmen have grown so accustomed to being the masters of India that they have not sufficiently realized the difficulty of Hastings' task, or the genius of the man whose far-sight first saw and whose brave and confident patience realized this romantic idea of his country's greatness.'[1]

But at the end, after his resignation of office, Warren Hastings wrote his final lament over what might have been had adequate powers been given to his hand. There is both pathos and dignity in his words: 'Yet may I feel a regret to see that hope which I had too fondly indulged, and which I had sustained during thirteen laboured years with a perseverance against a succession of difficulties which might have overcome the constancy of an abler mind, of being in some period of time, however remote, allowed to possess and exercise the full powers of my station, of which I had hitherto held little more than the name and responsibility; and to see with it, which I had as fondly indulged, that I should become the instrument of raising the British name, and the substantial worth of its possessions in India, to a degree of prosperity proportioned to such a trust, both vanish in an instant, like the illusions of a dream; with the poor and only consolation left me of the conscious knowledge of what I could have effected, had my destiny ordained that I should attain the situation to which I aspired, and that I have left no allowable means untried, by which I might have attained it.'[2]

It is hardly possible, when reading these words, not to reflect how much more peaceful, how much happier, the history of our Indian dominion might have been if Parliament had granted to Warren Hastings full powers to act for his country. But it was an evil time with English politics. In the West thirteen loyal colonies had been driven into revolt by the folly and incompetence of Ministers. In the East the nascent greatness of a new empire was looked upon by two unscrupulous factions chiefly as a promising provision for their followers at home.

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xc. [2] Ibid., p. xcviii.

This book is avowedly occupied with a vindication of Warren Hastings from the charges so unsparingly brought against him; but it may be thought no more than just if some public services of his, less contentiously treated, are brought under notice. 'It was,' says Mr. Forrest, 'his capacious mind that first conceived the plan of opening friendly commercial intercourse between the people over whom he ruled and the natives of the tableland behind the snowy peaks to the north.'[1] It is instructive to observe how superior were his views, on this as on other matters of state, to those of the acrimonious triumvirate in the Council who did everything in their power to defeat his policy. It was as early as the spring of 1774 that, after a correspondence with the rulers of Thibet and Bhutan, Warren Hastings, as Governor of the Bengal Presidency, dispatched the first British Mission to Thibet, under the care of Mr. George Bogle. It was a pacific expedition, undertaken for commercial purposes, and unaccompanied by any military display. The envoy was successful in obtaining an interview with the Teshoo Lama, and on February 24, 1775, the Governor-General (as he had then become) laid before the Board a letter from Mr. Bogle, informing them of his interview with the Lama, and enclosing an interesting memorandum on the trade of Thibet.[2] He states therein that the trade of the country is 'very considerable'. He writes that the principal articles of merchandise between Bengal and Thibet are 'broadcloth, atter, skins, indigo, pearls, coral, amber, and other beads, chank, spices, tobacco, sugar, Malda striped satins and a few white cloths, chiefly coarse, the return being made in gold dust, musk, and cowtails.'

He also says: 'The trading pilgrims of India resort hither in great numbers. Their humble deportment and holy character, heightened by the merit of distant pilgrimages, their accounts of unknown countries and remote regions, and, above all, their professions of high

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcvi. [2] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 251.

veneration for the Lamas, procure them not only a ready admittance, but great favour; though clad in the garb of poverty, there are many of them possessed of considerable wealth; their trade is confined chiefly to articles of great value and small bulk. It is carried on without noise or ostentation, and often by paths unfrequented by other merchants. The Calmacks, who with their wives and families annually repair in numerous tribes to pay their devotions at the Lamas' shrines, bring their camels loaded with fur and other Siberian goods.'

In his letter to the Governor-General Mr. Bogle says of the Teshoo Lama: 'His character and abilities, his having discovered and placed the present Dalai Lama in the chair at Potalo, his being favoured by the Emperor of China, and his having obtained from him the appointment of the present Chief, give him great influence. The seat of government is, however, at Lahassa. The Emperor of China is paramount sovereign, and is represented by the Chinese officers, who are changed every three years. Teesho Lama has a number of villages and monasteries belonging to him, which are scattered over Thibet, and intermixed with those of the Dalai Lama.'[1]

So far, this interesting Mission promised to have good results, but when Bogle returned from Thibet he found Clavering, Monson, and Francis[2] in power, bent on thwarting every project of the Governor-General, and prejudiced against all persons whom he had employed. Bogle was superseded in his former employment, and it was only with difficulty that Warren Hastings obtained for him a moderate remuneration for his remarkable services. Of course, the effort to open up commercial intercourse to the north of the Himalayas was set aside at once.

But when the opportune death of Monson restored to the Governor-General the control of his Council he resumed

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 254.

[2] The three new Members of Council, appointed by the Crown under the Regulating Act.

his former project, and in April, 1779, George Bogle was commissioned to proceed again to Bhutan and Thibet 'for the purpose of cultivating and improving the good understanding subsisting between the Chiefs of those countries and the Government, and to endeavour to establish a free and lasting intercourse of trade with the kingdom of Thibet and the other States to the northward of Bengal.'[1] The Lama, whose respect and confidence Bogle had won, was then on a visit to Pekin, and he desired Bogle to go round by sea to Canton, promising to obtain the Emperor's pass for him to proceed and join him in the capital. But, unhappily, the death of both the Lama and Bogle caused the intention of sending a mission to be for a time abandoned.

Subsequently, when Warren Hastings received letters from Thibet informing him that the soul of the late Lama had entered and animated the body of an infant, he proposed to send a second deputation to that country. The Board consented, and Mr. Charles Turner was appointed to proceed on the mission. When Warren Hastings was on his journey to Lucknow, he met Turner returning from Thibet, who handed to him a report on the results of his mission and also a narrative of his interview with the young Lama.

This narrative is so curious and interesting that some extracts from it may be acceptable: 'On December 3, 1783, I arrived at Terpaling, situated on the summit of a high hill, and it was about noon when I entered the gates of the monastery which was not long since erected for the reception and education of Teesho Lama. He resides in a palace in the centre of the monastery, which occupies about a mile of ground in circumference, and the whole is encompassed by a wall. On the 4th, in the morning, I was allowed to visit Teesho Lama, and found him placed in great form upon his musnud. On the left side stood his father and mother, on the other the officer particularly appointed to wait upon his person. The musnud is a fabric of silk cushions piled one upon the

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcvi.

other until the seat is elevated to the height of four feet from the floor; embroidered silk covered the top, and the sides were decorated with pieces of silk of various colours suspended from the upper edge and hanging down. I advanced and, as is the custom, presented the white Pelong handkerchief, and delivered also into the Lama's hands the Governor's present of a string of pearls and coral, while the other things were set down before him. Having performed the ceremony of the exchange of handkerchiefs with his father and mother, we took our seats on the right of Teesho Lama. During the time we were in the room I observed the Lama's eyes were scarce ever turned away from us, and when our cups were empty of tea he appeared uneasy, and throwing back his head and contracting the skin of his brow he kept making a noise, for he could not speak, until they were filled again. He took out of a golden cup containing confects some burnt sugar, and stretching out his arm made a motion to his attendant to give them to me.

'I found myself, though visiting an infant, under the necessity of saying something, for it was intimated to me that, notwithstanding he is unable to reply, it is not to be inferred he cannot understand. I briefly said that the Governor-General, on receiving news of his decease in China, was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow, and continued to lament his absence from the world until the cloud that had overcast the happiness of this nation, by his re-appearance was dispelled, and then, if possible, a greater degree of joy had taken place than he had experienced of grief on receiving the first mournful news. The Governor wished he might long continue to illumine the world with his presence, and was hopeful that the friendship which had formerly subsisted between them would not be diminished, but rather that it might become still greater than before. The little creature turned, looking steadfastly towards me with the appearance of much attention while I spoke, and nodded with repeated but slow

movements of the head as though he understood and approved every word, but could not utter a reply. The parents who stood by all the time eyed their son with a look of affection, and a smile expressive of heartfelt joy at the propriety of the young Lama's conduct. His whole regard was turned to us, he was silent and sedate, never once looking towards his parents, as if under their influence at the time, and with whatever pains his manners may have been formed so correct, I must own his behaviour on this occasion appeared perfectly natural and spontaneous, and not directed by any action or sign of authority.

'Teesho Lama is at this time about eighteen months of age. He did not speak a word, but made most expressive signs, and conducted himself with astonishing dignity and decorum. His complexion is of that hue which in England we should term rather brown, but not without colour. His features good, small black eyes, an animated expression of countenance, and altogether I thought him one of the handsomest children I had ever seen. On the following morning I again waited on him to present some curiosities I had brought for him from Bengal. He was very much struck with a small clock, and had it held to him, watching for a long time the revolution of the minute hand. He admired it, but with gravity, and without any childish emotion.

'According to appointment I went in the afternoon to make my last visit to the Teesho Lama. I received his dispatches for the Governor-General, and from his parents two pieces of satin for the Governor with many compliments. They presented me with a vest lined with lamb-skins, making me many assurances of a long remembrance, and observing that at this time Teesho Lama is an infant and incapable of conversing, but they hoped to see me again when he shall have become of age. I replied that by favour of the Lama I might again visit this country.'[1]

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 1079.

That might probably have happened if Warren Hastings had remained at Calcutta, but the time soon arrived for him to leave, and with his departure all interest in the policy of opening up commercial intercourse between India and the Trans-Himalayan regions seems to have been abandoned. Mr. Forrest says that the very history of the Hastings negotiations was forgotten, and most of the valuable records of the Thibet and Bhutan missions have been lost.[1] It is only a few years since that a military expedition to Lhassa once more opened Thibet to European eyes; but it may perhaps be doubted whether the prospects of any extended trade have been improved by an armed intervention.

The great merit of Warren Hastings' effort, which was entirely his own, lay in its pacific and unostentatious nature. It roused no fears and offended no susceptibilities. It sprang from his inquiring mind, and was characteristic of his constant policy, that of spreading British influence through the East by diplomacy rather than by war.

The missions of Bogle and Turner were not the only expeditions of discovery organized by the Governor-General.[2] He caused the harbours and rivers of Cochin China to be surveyed, and directed the explorer to penetrate as far as he could into the interior. He also had the shores of the Red Sea examined, with the view of opening, by that line, a more direct and rapid communication between England and India. In the chapter on Daylesford there is given an anecdote showing his perception of the vital importance of the Persian Gulf as a political position. In truth, nothing is more striking in Warren Hastings than his rare gift of prescience.[3] He seemed to look into the future and to divine its fruits.

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcvii.

[2] See *State Papers*, Introd., Vol. I, p. xcvii.

[3] A striking example of this prescience is to be found in his perception of the danger that might arise from a growth of the Sikh power. In 1784 he wrote to the Council: 'A new source of serious

He had probably a faculty for acquiring languages. As a boy at Westminster School he showed a marked proficiency in the classical tongues, which he did not altogether lose during his strenuous public life, as his imitation of one of Horace's *Odes*, written during his voyage home, sufficiently proves. In the East he acquired an intimate knowledge both of Persian and Arabic literature, and a conversational acquaintance with Hindustani which stood him in good stead on more than one critical occasion, and undoubtedly increased his influence with the natives. In one of his minutes concerning his negotiation with Sujah-ul-Dowla at Benares, he mentioned the advantage he had felt from conversing with the Vizier of Oude in his own tongue. He was not personally acquainted with Sanscrit, but he fully estimated the literary and philological importance of that ancient language, he encouraged its study, and extended his aid and protection to its native professors. The Hindu Pundits were conciliated by his just rule, which secured to them their immemorial laws and usages; while the adherents of the faith of Islam were equally complimented by his foundation of a Mahomedan College at Calcutta. The Asiatic Society remains another

contemplation has arisen from a nearer quarter, namely, that of the Sikhs, a people who, from a mean sect of religious schismatics, have rapidly grown into the members of a dominion extending from the most western branch of the Attock to the walls of Delhi. They are by their bodily frame and habits of life eminently suited to the military profession, but this propensity is qualified by a spirit of independence which is a great check to its exertion. Every village has its separate and distinct ruler, acknowledging no control but that of the people of his own immediate community, who in their turn yield him little more than nominal submission.' He thought, however, that the rise of some man of superior capacity might weld them into a nation. He looked 'to time, and that not far distant, for verifying my prediction, if this people shall be permitted to grow into maturity without interruption'. Time and Runjeet Sing verified this prediction: the Sikhs were consolidated into a nation, and we had, more than sixty years since, a desperate struggle to hold our own against them. *State Papers*, Introd., p. xcv.

splendid monument of his zeal for the advancement of Oriental learning. Macaulay, who does Warren Hastings justice for these things, observes, however, that he did nothing to give to the Bengalees a knowledge of English literature. That is true; he may have thought it wiser to train them in their own languages and philosophies than to give them an alien graft of Western thought. It is possible that the experience of the present day may serve to justify that conclusion.[1]

[1] These words were written before Lord Morley of Blackburn, Secretary of State for India, spoke at the Indian Civil Service Club on June 11, 1908, when he referred to the prophecy made by Macaulay in 1836: 'It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be an idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence. And this will be effected merely by the natural operation of knowledge and reflection.' The observation of Lord Morley was: 'Ah, gentlemen, the natural operation of knowledge and reflection carries men of a different structure of mind, of different beliefs, of different habits and customs of life—it carries them into strange and unexpected paths.'

Was Warren Hastings wrong when he limited his educational efforts to the improvement of the natives of Bengal in their own language, philosophies, and beliefs?

CHAPTER II

THE ROHILLA WAR

THE Rohilla War was the earliest subject of accusation against Warren Hastings. The circumstances that led to the war originated not long after his assumption of the Governorship of Bengal, and it actually took place shortly before Francis, Clavering, and Monson landed at Calcutta as new members of the Council, prepared to range themselves at once against him. He was fiercely denounced for having destroyed an independent nation, and that for sordid, pecuniary ends. The Rohillas were described as an industrious, peaceful people who had been cruelly driven from their country of Rohilcund. The baselessness of this charge is best exhibited by a plain statement of the facts, which will be found, supported by authorities, in the following pages. But it is also desired, as a necessary prelude, to make a few remarks on the political condition of India at the time when Warren Hastings became Governor of Bengal.

The Delhi Emperor, representative of the great line of Timour, Lords of Hindustan, had fallen into such a helpless state, that he had to leave his throne at Delhi, and Clive had assigned to him the districts of Korah and Allahabad (situated south-west of Oude) to afford him the means of sustenance. The whole country was in a state of disorganization; what government there was existed only in scattered principalities and chiefships, usually under Mahomedan rulers; while Hindu races, such as Sikhs and Mahrattas, continually threatened their neighbours with invasion and plunder. The Mahrattas especially, whose capital was

Poonah, were at every convenient season pushing up to the north to aggrandize their territory and were a standing terror to the inhabitants of the north-east. They had been defeated at the great battle of Paniput, when Ahmed Shah, an Afghan commander, had united and led the Mahomedan forces, and for a time the Mahrattas had been decisively driven back. But Ahmed Shah was now no more, the Mahrattas had returned, and the Emperor had weakly yielded to them Korah and Allahabad as the price for their replacing him on the throne at Delhi. To this arrangement, which brought the Mahrattas in perilous contiguity to the provinces of Behar and Bengal, of which (together with Orissa) Clive had obtained a grant from the Emperor, Warren Hastings, on behalf of the Government at Calcutta, refused to submit. He moved a military force northwards to Allahabad, and occupied that district and Korah. The occupation was memorable, being the first advance which the Company made beyond their recognized territory.

This state of things is the key to the story of the Rohilla War.[1] Macaulay's hasty and superficial conception was that the war was a device on the part of Warren Hastings to raise money. It was in reality, divested of personal incidents, the outcome of a far-reaching policy, designed to meet the grave and persistent dangers of that disturbed time. As Sir Alfred Lyall clearly puts it: "It was the policy of the English, when Warren Hastings took charge of the Bengal Presidency, to maintain and strengthen the group of Mahomedan chiefships along their border, as a barrier against invasion from beyond, and especially against the depredations of the restless, treacherous, and far-roving Mahratta hordes. The most considerable among these potentates, whose possessions, by their extent and situation, could best serve our purposes, was undoubtedly

[1] Sir John Strachey's exhaustive treatment of the subject completely bears out this opinion.

the Vizier of Oude.'[1] It was because the Vizier occupied this position that the Bengal Government lent him disciplined troops, the expense of which he gladly undertook to defray; it was for this that they entered into treaty arrangements with him for mutual defence; and it was for this that Warren Hastings felt himself, it cannot be said willing, for he was most reluctant, but compelled by policy, to assist, as against the shifty Rohillas, the one ally who could furnish a barrier sufficiently strong to check the ever-present danger on the north-west.

It must also be remembered that the territory of Rohilcund is situated to the north of Oude, and that its destinies were inevitably bound up with that province. 'It lies,' said Warren Hastings, 'open to the south. It is bounded on the west by the Ganges and on the north and east by the mountains of Tartary. It is to the province of Oude, in respect both to geographical and political relation, exactly what Scotland was to England before the reign of Queen Elizabeth.'[2] And, in a Minute to the Secret Committee of the Council, he pointed out the real position of the Rohillas: 'They are not the people of the country, but a military tribe who conquered it, and quartered themselves upon the people without following any profession but that of arms, or mixing in any relation with the native inhabitants.' Those inhabitants were Hindu cultivators of the soil, rooted thereon for centuries. The Rohillas were Afghan soldiers of fortune, who had not been settled there more than sixty years.

This Rohilla country, which was then known as Kather, had been subjected in 1290 to the Mogul rule. In 1673 two Afghan adventurers, Shah Alum and Hussein Khan, settled there for a time, it is believed in some inferior offices under the Mogul. When they left, a slave of Hussein, one Daud Khan, was permitted to remain, and he gathered round him a band of Afghan followers. He obtained the grant of a district from the Emperor, and then betrayed him

[1] Lyall, p. 32. [2] Gleig, Vol. I, p. 358.

by taking service with a rebel Rajah, by whom Daud was afterwards put to death. Daud had an adopted son, of the Jat caste, whom he made a Mussulman and named Ali Muhammed.[1] Boy as he was at the time of his (adoptive) father's death, Ali Muhammed took possession of the estates and placed himself at the head of the troops. In the confusion into which the Empire had fallen at this time he established his dominion over the whole of Kather, which then took the name of Rohilcund. On his death he committed the care of his son to Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the son of Shah Alum, who swore on the Koran to be faithful to his trust. This oath he broke, sacrificed the interests of Ali's family, and made himself the head of the Rohilla confederacy.

He was sufficiently formidable to find his aid invoked by the Vizier of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla, on the occasion of his contest with the English, and Rahmat's son was present, with 6,000 Rohillas, at the battle of Patna, and again at Buxar, where he shared the defeat of the Vizier. Six years after this the Mahrattas invaded Rohilcund, plundering and destroying all before them; and the Rohilla chiefs had to retire into the Terai, a strip of wild country which runs at the bottom of the Himalayas, where they entrenched themselves for several months. The Vizier, fearing an invasion of Oude by the Mahratta marauders, obtained the assistance of Sir Robert Barker, Commander-in-Chief in Bengal, and advanced with his own forces and some English troops to the border. Negotiations were opened with the Rohilla troops, and Hafiz Rahmat on their behalf visited the Vizier's camp, and entered into a treaty which was sworn to in the presence of the English commander and countersigned by him. The agreement arrived at was simple and explicit; the Vizier undertook to rid Rohilcund of the Mahrattas 'either by peace or war', and the Rohillas

[1] There are different opinions on this point; but the account given above seems the most probable.

undertook to pay him in return forty lacs of rupees. The Mahrattas then withdrew.

In the autumn of this year (1773) the Mahrattas again advanced to invade Rohilcund. It had been made manifest by the events just narrated that the Rohillas could not defend it; the Vizier was well aware that the real objective of the marauders was his own territory, and he obtained the aid of an English brigade for its defence. This brigade, with the Oude troops, surprised the Mahrattas just as they were crossing the Ganges and drove them back. The English commander in his turn crossed the river, and pursued for some distance, but fruitlessly. When he returned he found Rahmat Khan in the camp of the Vizier. Rahmat had been secretly negotiating with the Mahrattas, offering them a sum of money if they would assist him to evade payment of the forty lacs he had agreed on; but finding that his treachery had failed, he joined Sujah-ul-Dowla, and Rohilcund was cleared of its invaders.

The Vizier now demanded payment of the forty lacs. The Rohillas shuffled and procrastinated; as a fact they never paid a single rupee. It was then that Sujah-ul-Dowla resolved, in retribution, to take possession of their country. This was the proximate cause of the war for which so much blame was ignorantly showered on the Governor.

The above is a short narrative of the Rohilla business up to the time when Warren Hastings actively intervened therein. The Vizier had already moved in it; Sir Robert Barker was anxious to second him; but hitherto the question had been confined to discussion among the members of the Government, and Warren Hastings had shown himself averse to action.

It was on June 24, 1773, that the Governor, with the concurrence of his Council, left Calcutta for Benares, where it was arranged that he should have an interview with the Vizier of Oude. It was well understood that the negotiations to be carried on were of high importance, and three other members of the Government had been delegated to

accompany and advise their chief. The treaty then arrived at did not directly affect the Rohillas, but as it arose out of the disturbing circumstances in which the Empire was then involved it bore in effect on the destinies of those unstable adventurers, and may therefore be conveniently mentioned here.

The Delhi Emperor, as already stated, had thought fit to hand over the provinces of Korah and Allahabad, which he had received from Clive, to the Mahrattas as the price for replacing him on the throne at Delhi; and he was now a mere tool in their hands, actually heading one of their expeditions for the plunder of Rohilcund. This conduct of his was the more dangerous because it had been carried out in the teeth of remonstrance and advice from Calcutta. The Governor saw that the presence of marauding hordes at our gate was a grave and menacing danger.[1] It was intolerable that they should be supported by funds supplied from Bengal. Peace and prosperity in our own territory were impossible under such circumstances. He acted with promptitude and courage. He determined to pay no more tribute to a sovereign who was incapable of affording protection to our frontier, and whose intrigues threatened the tranquillity of all India. His reasons for taking this step were well expressed in the Report of his proceedings at Benares.[2] Speaking of the Emperor he says: 'Whatever policy suggested the first idea of the tribute, and whatever title he may be conceived to have had to the payment of it while he remained under our portection and united his fortune with ours, his late conduct has forfeited every claim to it, and made it even dangerous to allow it, even if the resources of Bengal and the exigencies of the Company would any longer admit of it. Our conduct to him has certainly afforded matter of admiration to the whole people of Hindoostan, whether they construe it as the effect of a mistaken principle of duty, the just return

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xii. [2] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 51.

of benefits received, or attribute it to some hidden cause. We have persevered with a fidelity unknown to them in an unshaken alliance to a pageant of our own creation, and lavished on him the wealth of this country, which is its blood, although not one of his own natural subjects has ever afforded him the least pledge of voluntary obedience, although our constituents have been compelled to withhold the legal claims of our own sovereign, although we have loaded them with an accumulated debt of a crore and a half of rupees, almost the exact amount of the sums remitted for the use of a man who in return has ungratefully deserted and has since headed armies against us. It is unjust to argue, in support of his pretensions on the Company, that the tribute is no more than a reasonable acknowledgement for the favour which they received from him in the grant of the Dewannee. They gave him all. They received nothing from him but a presumptuous gift of what was not his to give, but what they had already acquired by their own power, the same power to which he was indebted for his crown, and even for his existence.'

Warren Hastings also determined to restore the provinces of Korah and Allahabad to the Vizier of Oude. He said in the same Report relating to his negotiations with Sujah-ul-Dowla: 'Had we restored these districts to the King, who so lately abandoned them, and who is confessedly unable by his own strength to maintain them, we should still have been burdened with the care of their defence, or we should have given them only nominally to the King, but in reality to the Mahrattas, the evil consequences of which it is needless to enumerate.' The danger from the Mahrattas was evident enough. They had already once made an alliance with the Rohillas, and other intrigues were known to be on foot. The one object with the Governor was to make the relations between the Company and the Vizier as stable as possible; and with that view he wrote: 'By ceding them to the Vizier we strengthen our alliance with him, we make him more dependent upon

us as he is more exposed to the hostilities of the Mahrattas; we render a junction between him and them, which has been sometimes apprehended, morally impossible, since their pretensions to Korah will be a constant source of animosity between them; we free ourselves from the expense and all the dangers attending either a remote property or a remote connexion; we adhere literally to the limited system laid down by the Court of Directors; we are no longer under the necessity of exhausting the wealth of our own provinces in the pay and disbursements of our brigades employed at a distance beyond them; but by fixing the sum to be paid by the Vizier for their services at their whole expense, and by removing every possible cause for their passing but at his requisition and for his defence, we provide effectually for the protection of our frontier, and reduce the expenses of our army even in employing it; and lastly we acquire a net sum of 50 lacks of rupees most seasonably obtained for the relief of the Company's necessities, and the deficient circulation of the currency of the provinces.'[1]

The conclusions at which the Governor had arrived, as expressed in the foregoing passages of his Report, were communicated by him to the Emperor in a letter as remarkable for its studied courtesy and moderation as it is for its clearness and directness of expression.[2]

It may be mentioned in passing that one of the stipulations made by Warren Hastings with the Vizier, when at Benares, was for the grant to Rajah Cheit Sing of an Agreement guaranteeing to him all the rights and privileges enjoyed by his late father, Bulwunt Sing; an act of personal kindness which was ungratefully requited.

Before passing to more direct dealing with the Rohilla War, it may be pointed out that Macaulay, in his remarks on the stopping of the payment to the Emperor and the transfer of Korah and Allahabad to the Vizier, both of

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 50.   [2] Ibid., p. 58.

which proceedings he strongly condemns, never mentions the fact that the Emperor had, against the remonstrance of the Calcutta Government, ceded those two provinces to the Mahrattas. He speaks of them as 'torn from the Mogul'. But the Mogul had voluntarily parted with them, and they were taken by the English, not from him, but from the Mahrattas. It is a curious sample of the carelessness, or prejudice, or both, with which the Essay was written.

The question of the Rohillas, as already stated, formed no part of the actual treaty; but during the negotiations the fickle and intriguing conduct of their chiefs was the subject of conversation (as it had indeed been of correspondence before the Governor left Calcutta), and Sujah-ul-Dowla made a proposal which was noticed at length in the formal Report to the Secret Committee. The passage therein is as follows: 'The Vizier was at first very desirous of the assistance of an English force to put him in possession of the Rohilla country lying north of his dominion and east of the Ganges. This has long been a favourite object of his wishes, and you will recollect that the first occasion of my late visit was furnished by a proposal of this kind. He had certainly just grounds for resentment against the chiefs of this nation, who had not only failed in their engagement to pay him 40 lacks of rupees for his protection against the Mahrattas, but had actually supplied them with money when they appeared in arms against him. He offered to make the Company a consideration for this service of 40 lacks of rupees, besides the stipulated sum for the expenses of our troops; but he afterwards laid aside this design, fearing that it would disable him from fulfilling his engagements for Korah and Allahabad. . . . The measures to be pursued for his security in that quarter must therefore be determined by future occurrences. I was pleased that he urged the scheme of this expedition no further, as it would have led our troops to a distance from our own borders, which I would wish

ever to avoid, although there are powerful arguments to recommend it.'[1]

It is thus clear that when Warren Hastings returned to Calcutta he believed that the scheme proposed by the Vizier had been abandoned. Yet any reader of the Essay would suppose that the proposal had been at once accepted and the scheme carried out accordingly! But the truth of the matter is made evident by the answer given by the Governor-General, when Philip Francis accused him of withholding from his colleagues any account of his negotiations with the Vizier, and of having kept out of the treaty the agreement he had (as Francis alleged) privately made with Sujah-ul-Dowla. This allegation, like others made by Francis, was false. Three members of the Government, deputed for that purpose, accompanied the Governor-General to Benares, and were kept fully informed of the negotiations as these went on. This is clearly stated in the Minute[2]: 'I have already observed that I informed Messrs. Lawrell, Vansittart, and Lambert, who were deputed with me by the Board, of every circumstance which passed during the whole course of the negotiations, but it was unnecessary that these circumstances should be recorded, when they had become entirely foreign to the purposes of the treaty. The Rohilla expedition *was laid aside*, or more properly, it had not been adopted, for the Vizier's proposal on this subject had never been ratified. It is true an option remained with the Vizier to renew this subject, but an option also remained with the administration either to reject or to assent to it. It so happened that he did renew the subject; but at the time of concluding the Benares treaty it appeared probable to me that he would not renew it; and where was the occasion for loading our records with the particulars of transactions which had been voluntarily laid aside by the Vizier who was the interested party in them, especially as they had been unreservedly communicated by myself

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 51. [2] Ibid., p. 178.

and the members who had been with me to the other members of the administration in private intercourse? If he had renewed the proposal, it was then time enough to enter upon a public discussion of this matter, when it became a measure of administration and was decided upon by them. This is precisely the case with the measure in question. . . . I certainly thought it possible, and this is the plain meaning of the words used in my Report upon the subject, *viz.* "that the measures to be pursued for his security in that quarter must be determined by future occurrences". That is, if the Rohillas would pay the forty lacks due from them and join in a scheme of defensive alliance with the Vizier, the measure to be pursued for his security in that quarter would be to afford the Rohillas protection. If, on the contrary, they gave encouragement to the enemy or refused to pay the forty lacks, the measures to be pursued for his security in that quarter would be to drive out the Rohillas and reduce the country occupied by them within the line of his dominion.'

The above extract shows conclusively that the real object of Warren Hastings was to secure the north-western frontier of the provinces he was bound to guard against Mahratta inroads; if that could be effected by an alliance between the Rohillas and the Vizier, well and good. If not, then he was ready to consider, and with reluctance to accept, the scheme for annexation by the Vizier. But so far from being, as Macaulay would have us believe, a sordid plot to obtain money by the sale of a brave people, it was a move of statesmanship, rendered necessary in the interest of an ally by the treachery inherent and persistent in the Rohilla tribes. Nor was the proposal for invasion and annexation ever made by Warren Hastings. It was made by the Vizier for his own ends, prompted by a resentment which must be admitted to have been just; and it was seconded by Sir Robert Barker, Commander-in-chief in Bengal, who considered the annexation necessary for military reasons.

To revert to the events which immediately led to the Rohilla War, it appears that shortly after the Governor returned to Calcutta he received a letter from the Vizier stating his determination to attack the Rohillas, and saying: 'Should I therefore have occasion for the assistance of the English forces to carry on my operations in that country, I desire to know what is your pleasure, whether you will let me have those forces when I shall call for them, or you will not.' This letter does not seem to have been answered. Mr. Forrest says that Warren Hastings was 'both surprised and mortified' to receive it. Certainly he was in no hurry to accede to the proposal.

A month later another letter arrived, saying that Rahmat Khan was about to take possession of country belonging to the Mahrattas, an act to which the Vizier would never consent; that the Rohillas had not paid a single 'daam' of the 40 lacs of rupees due to him according to agreement, and that he would without doubt undertake an expedition against them. He went on: 'During our interview at Benares we had some conversation on the subject, and it was then agreed that I should pay to the Company 40 lacks of rupees after the expulsion of the Rohillas, and 210,000 rupees monthly on account of the English brigade during my operations in the Rohilla country; and that I should with the assistance of the English forces endeavour to punish and exterminate[1] the Rohillas out of their country. If therefore these terms are agreeable to you, I desire to know whether you will assist me with the English forces, or you will not.'[2]

It cannot be doubted that the Rohillas, by their refusal to pay the sum covenanted to be paid by them in a solemn

[1] Warren Hastings explained to the Secret Committee that the word which is here translated 'extirpate' means to expel or remove; and he added, 'In this sense I did most certainly agree to assist the Vizier, and so did the Council, nor can I conceive how the war could have been undertaken with any other object.'

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 76.

treaty, a sum for which they had received solid value in the expulsion of the Mahrattas from their territory, as well as by their treachery in afterwards negotiating with the Mahrattas in order to evade payment, had given just cause for war. There is no European government which would not consider such conduct as furnishing a *casus belli*. The Secret Committee accordingly, when the Vizier's letter was submitted to them and had been considered, resolved—'That should the Vizier persist in his intentions with respect to the Rohilla country, and determine to prosecute the enterprise with steadiness to a conclusion, this Government, considering the strict alliance and engagements which subsist between the Company and Sujah Dowla, and particularly what passed between the President and the Vizier at the Conference at Benares, cannot on this occasion refuse him support and assistance; that the terms proposed by the Vizier appear highly advantageous to the Company, not only on account of the sum which is ultimately stipulated as a consideration for this service, but by immediately relieving them from the heavy expense of a large part of their army. Provided, therefore, full assurance and security can be obtained of the Vizier's intention and ability to make good the many payments which will in this event be due to the Company; Resolved that the 2nd Brigade now stationed at Dinapore be ordered to march on the Vizier's requisition.'[1]

The Committee also agreed that the President be requested to prepare an answer to the Vizier's letters. This he did; and his language was distinct: 'Concerning the country of the Rohillas, whatever was formerly proposed at Benares, that I am now equally ready to agree to; that is, the brigade which is now at Dinapore shall march whenever you require it, to join you, and proceed with you into the country of the Rohillas, which lies north of your dominions, to assist you in the entire reduction of it; and your Excellency, on your part, will supply them

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 77.

monthly with the stipulated sum of Rs 210,000 for their expenses, and whenever the country shall be so far conquered that you shall remain in possession of it, although the enemy may lurk in the hills and jungles, or a few refractory zemindars, as is usual, may withhold their allegiance, and your Excellency shall dismiss the brigade, you will, on its departure, pay forty lacks of rupees to the Company as a consideration for that service. To prevent future misunderstanding I have been thus explicit. I must beg leave further to add that if the expedition be once undertaken it will be absolutely necessary to persevere in it, until it shall be accomplished; you will therefore reflect whether it will be in your power to make the above payments punctually with others which are already due, and whether you can resolve on going through with the undertaking. If you are not certain of accomplishing these necessary points, I must request that you will suspend the execution of your undertaking till a more favourable time.'[1]

Some doubts having arisen as to the power of the Secret Committee to order a movement of the troops on its own authority, it was determined to lay the whole matter, with the President's letter, before a meeting of the Council. Warren Hastings took the opportunity to explain, in a long, clear Minute, his own views on the situation, and his real policy. That policy, as already pointed out, was directed to assuring the safety of the frontier, his great object through the whole business, and one as different from that imputed to him by his detractors as can well be imagined.

After stating that he had long considered the power of the Rohillas as dangerous to the Vizier, 'the only useful ally of the Company,' and as such had wished to see it annihilated, and pointing out the inability of the Rohillas to oppose the Mahrattas, he goes on to say: 'On the other hand, the Subadar of Oude must always be an object of

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 78.

jealousy and enmity to the Rohillas. His power is to be dreaded by them, and the situation of their country contiguous to his, and in a manner enclosed within the same natural boundaries, must make the possession of it always a desirable object with him, both for security and advantage. These are sources of enmity between them, which from the nature of things cannot fail of producing suitable effects, and it is more probable that we should soon see the Mahrattas and Rohillas join in hostilities against the Vizier than that they should continue in war with one another.

'But let us next view the advantages which would result to the Vizier, the ally of the Company, and to the Company itself from his possession of that part of the Rohilla country which is the object of the expedition now proposed. Our ally would obtain by this acquisition a complete compact state shut in effectually from foreign invasions by the Ganges, all the way from the frontiers of Behar to the mountains of Thibet, while he would remain equally accessible to our forces from the above provinces either for hostilities or protection. It would give him wealth, of which we should partake, and give him security without any dangerous increase of power. It would undoubtedly, by bringing his frontier nearer to the Mahrattas, for whom singly he would be no match, render him more dependent on us and cement the union more firmly between us. I must further declare that I regard as none of the most inconsiderable benefits to the Company from this measure, besides the 40 lacks held out to us, the easing them immediately of the burden of one-third of their whole army, while at the same time it is employed usefully for their interests and conveniently for keeping up its own discipline and practice in war.'[1]

He went on to express his doubts, notwithstanding the reasons for the expedition on general principles, whether it was advisable at that moment. He commended it to careful consideration; but at the same time felt it his duty

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 80.

to declare that he found himself embarrassed in his decision on account of what had passed between the Vizier and himself at Benares.

'This is the predicament in which I now stand with the Vizier; and although, from a fear of his not being able to fulfil his part of the agreement, I wish to avoid engaging in the project at present, yet it appears to me that a direct refusal, after what passed, would have an unfriendly aspect, and might admit of the construction of artifice and insincerity in our dealings with him.

'Moved by the doubts which I have exposed to the Board, and thus hampered by my situation with the Vizier, no better method occurred to me for freeing us from this dilemma than the letter which is now in reference before the Board. I have there expressed my consent to the expedition in terms which, if he agrees to them, are most likely to secure the advantages hoped from it, but which are more likely to make him relinquish the design. I trust the Board will find it so guarded, both in the substance and expression, that the Vizier must necessarily feel himself engaged to perform every condition required of him with the most rigid punctuality at the hazard of forfeiting the Company's friendship or revolt against the terms imposed on him and drop all thoughts of prosecuting the design, and that I verily believe will be the issue of his correspondence.'[1]

The Board concurred heartily with the President 'in wishing to avoid the expedition proposed; without entering into a discussion of the propriety of such an enterprise on general principles, the Board see in their full force all the circumstances of doubt as to its present expediency which the President has so clearly set forth, and they are also sensible of the embarrassment which he lies under from what passed on the subject between him and the Vizier at Benares. They are equally solicitous to save the honour of the Company and watch over its interests,

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 80.

and for that reason they approve of the letter now before them, which seems equally calculated to save both. The conditions, if accepted, would undoubtedly secure the greatest possible advantages from such an enterprise, but they appear to them more calculated to drive the Vizier into a refusal, which is what they trust in, as its most probable and almost infallible consequence, and which they wish for as the proper result of this proposition in the present circumstances of affairs'.[1]

But the letter of the Governor, from which so much was expected, failed to impress the Vizier. He called for the assistance of the brigade at Dinapore, and on the 17th of April, some ten months, be it observed, after the interview at Benares, he invaded, with its aid, the Rohilla territory. The brave and hardy warriors who had dominated the Hindu population therein for sixty years did not shrink from the encounter. Colonel Champion, in command of the British troops, bears witness in his dispatch to the desperate valour of their onset, and to the military skill shown by Hafiz Rahmat Khan. But all was fruitless against the steady courage of the English infantry and the deadly fire of the English artillery. Two thousand of the Rohillas were slain, and among them fell Rahmat Khan in the act of bravely rallying his troops. One of his sons was also killed, one made prisoner, and a third came into the Vizier's camp on the following day. Numbers of standards and more than fifty pieces of cannon were taken, and the power of the Rohillas was completely broken. Hafiz Rahmat, perjured from the outset of his career, and apparently callous to any obligation, civil or religious, deserved the fate that befell him. Nor did his tribesmen possess any quality, save that of courage, to command our respect. So far from being, as described by Macaulay, 'skilled in the arts of peace,' they had no occupation but the sword, and lived on the rent paid by

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 81.

the Hindu cultivators of Rohilcund, and on the casual plunder of adjacent territories. So far from being honourable and chivalrous, in any reasonable sense of the words, they were treacherous and faithless, as their race is only too wont to be, and their expulsion from Rohilcund and consequent dispersion were of unquestionable benefit to the peaceful inhabitants of surrounding communities.

The British troops maintained strict discipline, but on the part of the Vizier's forces there was some plundering, chiefly of the Rohilla camp. A few villages were burned during the operations, as is too often the case in all wars, some of them being set on fire by the Rohillas, some by their opponents. But there is no reason to believe in any further excesses. Tales of outrage on women were no doubt circulated, but no evidence to support them was ever produced, and when a specific charge of this nature was made against the Vizier himself it was proved to be untrue by a British officer, Major Hannay, who stated[1] that the Vizier was never in the place alleged, and never inside a zenana but once, and then, its inhabitants having left, to see whether it could be fitted up for his own family. Mr. Middleton, the British Resident at the Court of Oude, wrote, in reference to these slanders: 'The unhappy victims, who could not survive their shame, but had put a violent end to their own lives, are still living, and the Vizier has never seen them.'[2] Yet these fictions were adopted by Macaulay, and form a part of his indictment against Warren Hastings. Now it is certain that the letters of the Governor, written at the time, afford conclusive evidence in his favour. When Colonel Champion, who seems to have been out of temper because his troops had secured neither plunder nor prize-money, accused the Vizier of oppression and cruelty, and intimated that he, Champion, had no power to protect the inhabitants, Warren Hastings wrote to him indignantly: 'It could never have been

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 168. [2] Ibid., p. 181.

suspected by the Board that their orders to you would have tied up your hands from protecting the miserable, stopped your ears to the cries of the widow and fatherless, or shut your eyes against the wanton display of oppression and cruelty. I am totally at a loss to distinguish wherein their orders have laid you under any greater restraint than your predecessors.'[1] And in a letter to Mr. Middleton he wrote: 'Colonel Champion complains of the conduct of the Vizier in suffering and even ordering his troops to ravage the country, and in his cruel treatment of the family of Hafiz Rahmat. . . . I desire that you will take an immediate occasion to remonstrate with him against every act of cruelty or wanton violence. The country is his, and the people his subjects. They claim by that relation his tenderest regard and unremitted protection. The family of Hafiz have never injured him, but have a claim to his protection in default of that of which he has deprived them. Tell him that the English manners are abhorrent of every species of inhumanity and oppression, and enjoin the gentlest treatment of a vanquished enemy. Require and entreat his observance of this principle towards the family of Hafiz.'[2]

This was written by the man who is said by Macaulay to have folded his arms and left the Vizier and his soldiery to work their will on the Rohilla country. Of the same character was the refusal of Warren Hastings to allow Champion and his brigade to claim the great treasure belonging to Fyzoollah Khan, the only Rohilla chief who had not surrendered, and who offered a large sum to the Company if they would befriend him. But the Governor, who has been accused of lending the Company's troops for money, refused the offer, and wrote to Champion: 'The very idea of prize-money suggests to my remembrance the former disorders which arose in our army from this service, and had almost proved fatal to it. Of this circumstance you must be sufficiently apprised, and of the neces-

[1] Gleig, Vol. I, p. 425. [2] Ibid., p. 438.

sity for discouraging every expectation of this kind among the troops. It is to be avoided like poison.'[1]

Macaulay declared that in aiding the Vizier with troops, and agreeing to accept from him a payment of forty lacs, 'England descended far below the level even of those petty German princes who about the same time sold us troops to fight the Americans.' But the comparison is not apposite. The German princes had no interest, direct or indirect, in the American War; they simply sold the use of their troops for money. The English Government at Calcutta did something very different; they lent their troops to an ally to punish certain chiefs for breach of a treaty to which the English Commander-in-chief had affixed his signature, and to annex a territory which those chiefs had gained possession of by the sword, and could no longer defend against a foe whose ambition menaced the safety of our own dominions. Macaulay does not seem to have perceived that in aiding the Vizier we were in truth aiding ourselves; his safety was our safety; not only were we bound to him by the ties of treaty and honour, but by the first law known to human policy, that of self-preservation.

Regarding the charge first brought by Francis, and repeated and embellished by Macaulay, that Warren Hastings took no guarantee from the Vizier that the war should be conducted in conformity with the humane rules of civilized warfare, the Governor-General wrote: 'It is a perversion of facts to say that "the British arms and honour were absolutely at the Vizier's disposal", that "an absolute surrender has been made of the honour and interest of the Company". We agreed to assist him in subduing the Rohillas. It was necessary to draw the line between the authority of the Vizier and our Commanding Officer. The service to be performed was entirely the Vizier's; it was therefore consistent and unavoidable that he should direct the objects of it; but the execution of military operations was expressly vested in our Commanding Officer;

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 274.

of course the safety of our army and the honour of the British name and arms were entirely confided to his conduct and discretion.'[1] And hence it was that Warren Hastings, when Champion complained of cruelty and oppression being practised, without any power of prevention on his part, replied with indignation that there was nothing in his (Champion's) instructions to fetter him in protecting the oppressed.

But the statements concerning cruelty and oppression to the inhabitants of Rohilcund, by whomsoever made and wheresoever repeated, were gross exaggerations, if not to say wilful perversions of the truth. The stories concerning the plunder and depopulation of the country were contradicted by unimpeachable witnesses. Major Hannay said: 'To the best of my knowledge I saw no signs of oppression to the inhabitants of the newly conquered country, but from particular inquiries which I had an opportunity of making of the country people they said they had met with no treatment that they could complain of.'[2] These were the people of whom Macaulay writes that their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated! And to quote Hannay's evidence again: 'At the time that I went upon an expedition from Bissowly to Sumbul, Meradabad, and Rampore, the country appeared to be in good cultivation, the inhabitants were employed in tilling it. It is in general one of the best cultivated countries I have seen in Hindustan, and very well inhabited, and the people appeared to be busy at this time as if there had been a profound peace, and under no kind of apprehension from the conquerors.'[3] This was the country, according to Macaulay, which had been reduced to a desert; a hundred thousand people flying to the jungles! The same witness testified to the evil character of the Rohillas, their faithlessness and bloodthirsty doings; 'it is a proverb in Hindustan that they pray with one hand

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 182. [2] Ibid., Introd., p. xxviii.
[3] Ibid., p. xxviii.

and rob with the other.'[1] Colonel Leslie, again, dismissed the stories of outrage on women as not to be credited; and Colonel Champion said they were only rumours he had heard; and as to the treatment of the prisoners, especially the family of Hafiz Rahmat, Colonel Leslie stated: 'The prisoners who fell into the hands of the Vizier, whom I believe to be very few, are now entertained in his service; there are some of the sons of Hafiz Rahmat, two particularly whom I know and have often seen riding in his suite. He generally took one of these out with him all the time he was at Bissowly; their appearance was good, and I think the same of the rest of his cavalry, and they appeared contented.'[2] The evidence quoted above was given, it must be remembered, by three of the leading officers who had been engaged in the war, and given before the committee appointed by Warren Hastings' enemies to inquire against him. It absolutely contradicts the reckless statement of Macaulay that 'The whole country was in a blaze. More than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles, preferring famine and fever and the haunts of tigers to the tyranny of him to whom an English and a Christian Government had for shameful lucre sold their substance, and their blood, and the honour of their wives and daughters'. This rhetorical invective is the more inexcusable because the evidence contradicting it has always been on record in the proceedings of the Secret Committee of the Indian Council, and Macaulay, when for five years a member of that Council, had ample opportunity to consult the authorities, and ascertain the truth for himself. He chose instead to rely on the mistakes or malignities of Francis, Burke, and Mill, without verification, and to indite thereupon, with all the wealth of his vocabulary, a hideous slander on the great founder of British India, on the Council, tried and experienced, who approved the policy, and, incidentally, on the fair fame before the world of his own country. Surely, the denouncement of the

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xxix. [2] Ibid., p. xxvii.

poet, 'God's great gift of speech abused,' never received darker illustration.

What says the able Editor of the *State Papers* on which this Vindication is founded? 'History furnishes no more striking example of the growth and vitality of a slander. The Rohilla atrocities owe their origin to the malignity of Champion and Francis; their growth to the rhetoric of Burke; and their wide diffusion to the brilliancy and pellucid clearness of Macaulay's style. A close and minute study of the evidence demonstrates that a certain number of the villages were burned, and that the prisoners were ill subsisted. A hundred thousand people did not fly to pestilential jungles, but about seventeen or eighteen hundred Rohillas with their families were expelled from Rohilcund, and Hindu inhabitants, amounting to about seven hundred thousand, remained in possession of their patrimonial acres and were seen cultivating their fields in peace.'[1]

What says Sir John Strachey, a most distinguished Indian administrator, as well as a highly informed and capable author, speaking from his own experience? 'Several years of my Indian service were passed in the province of Rohilkhand. When I was first sent there, old men were still living who remembered having heard in their childhood the story of Hafiz Rahmat, the great Rohilla Chief, of his defeat by the English, and his death. I went to Rohilkhand without a doubt of the truth of the terrible story told by Burke and Mill and by Lord Macaulay in his famous essay, but I soon changed my opinion. I found myself in the midst of a population by which the history of those times had not been forgotten, and of which an important and numerous section consisted of Rohillas, the children and grandchildren of the men whose race was supposed to have been almost exterminated. I was in frequent communication with a Rohilla Prince who ruled over a considerable territory which his ancestor owed to Warren Hastings, and which had been in the possession of his

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xxxi.

family ever since. No one had ever heard of the atrocities which to this day fill Englishmen with shame. Later in life I was able to undertake an examination of the original authorities on the Rohilla war, and I can hardly express in moderate language my indignation at the misrepresentations, the suppression of truth, the garbling of documents of which I found that Mill had been guilty. The English army was not hired out by Hastings for the destruction of the Rohillas: the Rohillas, described by Burke as belonging to "the bravest, the most honourable and generous nation on earth", were no nation at all, but a comparatively small body of cruel and rapacious Afghan adventurers who had imposed their foreign rule on an unwilling Hindu population, and the story of their destruction is fictitious.'[1]

The true conclusion is that the Rohilla war was clearly justified on grounds of public law and State policy:

Of public law, because the Rohillas provoked the war by their treachery and bad faith:

Of State policy, because the war, unsought by us, availed to effect the statesmanlike purpose of Warren Hastings to erect a solid barrier against menace on our northern frontier:

The barrier was erected, and the land had rest forty years.[2]

[1] *India*, by Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I., p. 194.
[2] See Lyall, pp. 34, 35.

CHAPTER III

NUNCOOMAR

THE accusation brought against Warren Hastings that he instigated the prosecution of Nuncoomar for forgery because that person had charged him before the Council with corrupt practices is undoubtedly one of the gravest among the several imputations on the character and honour of the Governor-General. Macaulay, indeed, who was convinced of its truth, maintains that it should not be counted among what the Essay terms 'his crimes', inasmuch as it was an act of self-defence, when he was sore pressed by Nuncoomar's vindictive attack. How far a man can be justified in causing, directly or indirectly, the death of a fellow-creature in order to save himself from ruin, is a point of casuistry which it is not proposed to argue. What is proposed is to show demonstratively, in the ensuing pages, that the statement concerning Warren Hastings having instigated, or having had any hand in, the prosecution of Nuncoomar on the charge of forgery, is absolutely unsupported by evidence, and is in fact totally untrue.

Soon after the close of the Rohilla War the Act of Parliament which altered the form of government in the Presidency of Bengal came into force. The administration of public affairs was by this Act entrusted to a new body which was to exercise an ultimate authority over the other Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, and which was to be composed of a Governor-General and four other members of Council. Unfortunately the Governor-General was given very little independent authority and was in truth only

primus inter pares, so that he was liable to be overruled by any chance majority. It was to the political error thus committed that much of the subsequent confusion and quarrel is to be attributed. Warren Hastings was named Governor-General of Bengal, and General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Philip Francis were three of the Councillors. The fourth was Mr. Barwell, an old and experienced official of the Company. Clavering had been appointed by the Ministry at home on account of his powerful parliamentary connexion; Monson for some personal interest; Francis, who had been a clerk in the War Office, and was and is supposed to have written the famous *Letters of Junius*, for more or less occult reasons. Not one of the three had any acquaintance with India or knew any native language. It is certain that in the disputes over public affairs which soon arose in the Council all the knowledge and experience was on one side, and all the ignorance and presumption on the other.

Warren Hastings, at this time, had been for three years Governor of Bengal by nomination of the Directors of the Company, promoted to that position in consequence of the ability and resource which he had shown as member of the Council at Madras; and he had already signalized his administration by the vigour and success of his measures. He had determined to do away with the double government established by Clive, had taken the collection of the revenue into his own hands, had created throughout the provinces Courts of Civil and Criminal Justice, with Courts of Appeal in the capital[1], had organized a force of military police to

[1] This was a great work, and in itself enough to hand down the name of Warren Hastings to posterity. In the Introduction to the *State Papers*, p. x, Mr. Forrest says: "It was impossible to place the revenue administration on a sound footing without a thorough reform in the administration of justice, and the first step Hastings took towards accomplishing a reform was the establishment of a Criminal and Civil Court in every district. The first consisted entirely of Mahomedans, and the latter of the principal officers of the revenue, assisted by the Judges of the Criminal Courts, and by

put down the bands of robbers which infested the country, and had thus introduced some approach (at any rate) to law and order in Bengal. Add to this that he had caused a digest of the Hindu law to be prepared by ten of the most learned pundits, and that he carried through a new assessment of the land revenue. Convinced that it was useless to maintain the fiction of the Nawab's sovereignty, he removed the seat of government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, and resolved that the Company should stand forth as the Ruler of the provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. Every one now acknowledges that these were wise and statesmanlike measures; yet the man who had achieved them was made the object of bitter attack by his new colleagues.

From the first week of their landing at Calcutta these three members of Council, Clavering, Monson, and Francis, took a violent line against the Governor-General. They began by denouncing the Rohilla War as impolitic and

the most learned pundits (or professors of Hindu law) in cases which depended on the peculiar usages or institutions of either faith.' These Courts were made dependent on two Supreme Courts which were established in the city of Calcutta, one for ultimate reference in capital cases, the other for appeals. To give the people confidence in the new Courts, and to enable the new tribunals to decide with certainty and dispatch, Hastings caused a digest of the Hindu law to be prepared by ten of the most learned pundits in the province. He writes to Lord Mansfield: 'This code they have written in their own language, the Sanscrit. A translation of it has begun under the inspection of one of their body into the Persian language, and from that into English. The two first chapters I have now the honour to present to your Lordship with this, as a proof that the inhabitants of this land are not in the savage state in which they have been unfairly represented, and as a specimen of the principles which constitute the rights of property among them.'

It may scarcely be credited that one of the steps taken by Clavering, Monson and Francis (described by Burke as the best administrators ever sent to India from England) was to abolish the District Courts and the police, and thus to throw back the province of Bengal into the lawlessness and disorder from which Warren Hastings had delivered it. These beneficial institutions were restored when the Governor-General regained his rightful authority in the Council. See Gleig, Vol. I, p. 263.

unjust, though, new as they were to Indian affairs, they could have known little or nothing of the policy involved; and they demanded from Warren Hastings the production of all his correspondence, public and private, with Mr. Middleton, the Resident at the Court of Oude. His private letters the Governor-General refused to give up, on the ground that it would be a breach both of honour and of policy to do so. He wrote to the Directors: 'My predecessors have ever followed the same rule, and I am persuaded would have thought it a dishonourable breach of confidence had they inserted on the records of the Company any letters which had been addressed to them as extra-official and private, without the consent of the writers of them. Lord Clive, Mr. Verelst, Mr. Cartier, General Smith, and General Sir Robert Barker are able to contradict me if I have misquoted their practice, and I shall be glad to appeal to them for the truth of it if there can be a doubt on the subject.' He also wrote to Lord North: 'The immemorial usage of the service had left the whole correspondence with the country powers in the hands of the Governor, and Mr. Middleton in that light could only receive his orders from and address his letters to me. In the course of his correspondence I had encouraged him to speak his sentiments freely under the assurance of their never becoming the subject of public record in cases which I judged improper for such a communication. When therefore Mr. Monson moved for the whole being laid before the Board, I could not consistently either with honour or good feeling comply. I urged these reasons, but they were overruled, and Mr. Middleton was immediately called from his station, and thus a declaration made to all Hindustan that my authority was extinct, and that new men and new measures would henceforth prevail. I do not know what use my opponents may make of my refusal to show those letters. I declare I have submitted every part to their perusal which was necessary for their information on public affairs, and as to those I have withheld, your

Lordship will, I hope, one day judge of the propriety of my conduct in this respect, it being my intention, as soon as Mr. Middleton arrives, to collect my entire correspondence with him, and to offer it for your Lordship's inspection.'

In consequence of the refusal to give up the letters, the three members, having the voting power in their hands, recalled Mr. Middleton, and directed Colonel Champion to conduct the negotiations. They ordered him to demand from the Vizier the immediate payment of the forty lacs due for the services of the troops in the Rohilla campaign, and of any other sum owing to the Company. They also resolved that 'further orders be sent to Colonel Champion that after having finished the negotiations for the money now due, he do immediately withdraw the whole of the forces under his command within the limits of the province of Oude, and that unless the Vizier should require the continuance of the troops for the defence of his original dominions, with the provinces of Korah and Allahabad, he return with them to the cantonments of Dinapore'.[1] Warren Hastings, who had vainly protested against these proceedings as alike impolitic and unjust, wrote to the Directors: 'They have disregarded the faith of our engagements which even in the most violent revolutions have ever been transmitted as sacred from one Government to that which has succeeded it; they have exposed the conquest which the British arms have acquired for the Vizier to be wrested from him, with the loss of our military reputation; they have risked the loss of the pecuniary resources which were stipulated for the Company as the fruits of their successes; and they have precipitately withdrawn the brigade from the station where its whole expense is borne by the Vizier to become again a heavy and useless burden upon ourselves'.[2]

In addition to all this, the three assailants went on to institute an inquiry into the manner in which the war had been conducted, hoping thus to injure the reputation of

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 122. [2] Ibid., p. 156.

the Governor-General. It has been already shown in the preceding chapter that this design of theirs failed completely. The witnesses called before the hostile committee denied the allegations of plunder, desolation, fire and outrage, and described the then condition of Rohilcund as being peaceful, prosperous, and contented.

There can be no doubt that the object of the majority was to supplant the Governor-General, to drive him from the country, and to obtain the reversion of his office for one of themselves.[1] It was with this end in view that they availed themselves of the aid of Nuncoomar to make an attack on Warren Hastings' personal integrity.

The relations existing at this time between the Governor-General and Nuncoomar can hardly be understood without reference to previous transactions. As far back as 1762 Warren Hastings had been employed by the Board to make inquiry concerning some intercepted letters which proved to have been forged. His report thereon has been published for the first time in the *Selection of State Papers*[2], and the following extracts from it are instructive. 'From several depositions and the circumstances herein presented the Board will judge on whom to fix the forgery of the letters in question. . . . I must give it as my opinion that it appears pretty clearly that there was a design on foot to compass the ruin of Ramchurn, that subsequent thereto the letters forged in his name were intercepted, that the man to whose charge they were entrusted was a servant of Nuncoomar, and that Sudder-Odin (a servant of Nuncoomar) did foretell the disgrace of Ramchurn, and was (by his own declaration afterwards) privy to the forgery of the letters. I say from these circumstances already proved, I am of opinion that the letters were written and intercepted by the contrivance and direction of Nuncoomar, in order to fix the charge of a traitorous correspondence on Ramchurn.'

[1] Lyall, p. 63.

[2] Vol. III, before Index.

Again, when Warren Hastings was named Governor by the Directors of the Company, Nuncoomar sent letters to him while he was still in Madras, in the names of the Nawab's uncle and of the Munny Begum, the widow of the Meer Jaffier to whom Clive had given the throne of Bengal. These letters were filled with invective against Mahomed Reza Khan, then head of the native administration, and with recommendation of Nuncoomar, who no doubt felt confident that he would supersede his rival, and obtain the post. Warren Hastings, after his arrival in Calcutta, found that the Munny Begum had no knowledge of this correspondence, and she declared that the letter purporting to be written by her and bearing her seal was a forgery.

Shortly after this Mahomed Reza Khan was, by express order of the Secret Committee, arrested on a charge of peculation. Nuncoomar was active in pressing this charge, and doubtless looked for his reward. After a protracted investigation, however, Reza Khan was acquitted, and set at liberty by the Governor himself. But his office was abolished in pursuance of the policy resolved on of doing away with the double government and placing the direct administration in the hands of the Company's officials. This was a bitter disappointment to Nuncoomar who had planned and plotted for his own elevation. 'It was natural', says Macaulay, 'that the Governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin.'

But in truth the animosity of Nuncoomar dated long before. Warren Hastings wrote to the Directors, 'From the year 1759 to the time when I left Bengal in 1764, I was engaged in a continued opposition to the interests and designs of that man, because I judged him to be adverse to the welfare of my employers; and in the course of this contention I received sufficient indications of his ill-will to have made me an irreconcileable enemy if I could suffer my passions to supersede the duty which I owe to

the Company.'[1] This was written in answer to the suggestion of the Directors that Nuncoomar should be rewarded for the services he rendered in the prosecution of Reza Khan; which suggestion was adopted by the Governor when, after appointing the Munny Begum to be superintendent of the young Nawab's household and guardian of his person, he nominated Rajah Goordas, the son of Nuncoomar, to assist her as manager. Sir Alfred Lyall speaks with surprise of this nomination of the son, looking to the evil character of the father, and says: 'It is hard to understand how Hastings could have been induced to adopt tactics that were neither clever nor particularly creditable.'[2] We may presume that Sir Alfred Lyall is not aware that the Governor was acting under the counsel of the Directors, who wished him to directly employ Nuncoomar. This he would not do, thinking the man too dangerous, but in an accommodating spirit he gave a valuable office to the innocent and respectable son. The Court of Directors expressed their approval of his conduct in this particular, and also of his choice of the Begum as guardian to the Nawab. But it is true that the appointment of Rajah Goordas did not placate Nuncoomar, who nourished his hate and waited his opportunity for revenge; nor did Burke's boasted chivalry prevent him, in after years, from making the choice of the Begum one of his accusations against Warren Hastings, applying to that lady, who had been the wife of one Nawab and the guardian of another, terms of almost ferocious abuse. Such were the amenities with which the impeachment of Warren Hastings was conducted!

On March 11, 1775, Francis informed the Board that he had that morning received a visit from the Rajah Nuncoomar, who delivered to him a letter addressed to the Governor and Council, and demanded that it should be laid before the Board. Francis declared that he was unacquainted with the contents of this letter.

[1] Gleig, Vol. I, p. 262. [2] Lyall, p. 38.

Nuncoomar stated therein his services to the Company, how he had faithfully administered the affairs of Bengal under Meer Jaffier, but had been deprived of his office by certain Englishmen who 'for views of private advantage had raised Mahomed Reza Khan to the post'; how Reza Khan (who had been, it must be remembered, tried and acquitted) had desolated the whole country by his oppressions and peculations, as was well known to all; how Reza Khan had offered, through Nuncoomar, ten lacs to the Governor, who refused them; how soon after, Mr. Hastings set Reza Khan at liberty, and entirely dropped the inquiry into his embezzlements and malpractices; 'how this extraordinary favour was so suddenly shown the Governor can best assign the reasons'; how 'the motives of these proceedings will best be understood from Mr. Hastings himself'; how, 'to offer a more particular and circumstantial statement of facts,' at various times in the year 1772 Warren Hastings had received the sum of three lacs and 54,000 rupees from himself and the Munny Begum 'for procuring Rajah Goordas' appointment and causing Munny Begum to be made the superior of the family'.[1] Of this letter Lord Thurlow truly said that 'a more extraordinary or a more insolent production never appeared, nor one which carried falsehood on the face of it more strongly'. Yet this was the evidence on which the three hostile members of Council grounded their charge of malversation against the Governor-General.

When the letter had been read, Warren Hastings, referring to the statement of Francis that he had been unacquainted with its contents, asked whether he (Francis) had been before acquainted with Nuncoomar's intention of bringing such charges. The answer of Francis was rather peculiar: 'As a member of this Council I do not deem myself bound to answer questions of mere curiosity. I am willing, however, to inform the Governor-General that I was totally unacquainted with the contents of the paper I have now

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 300 et seq.

delivered to the Board till I heard it read. I did apprehend in general that it contained some charge against him.' Francis, it may be observed, could hardly have failed to know the nature of the charges, for Nuncoomar had been already in private and intimate communication with Monson.

On the 13th of March a second letter from Nuncoomar to the Board was received and read. In this he reiterated his previous statements, declared that he had 'the strongest written vouchers to produce in support', and asked leave to appear before the Council to establish the accusation 'by an additional incontestable evidence'. Monson immediately moved 'that Rajah Nuncoomar be called before the Board'.

The Governor-General at once wrote a vigorous Minute, declaring that he would not suffer Nuncoomar to appear before the Board as his accuser. 'I know what belongs to the dignity and character of this Administration. I will not sit at this Board in the character of a criminal, nor do I acknowledge the members of the Board to be my judges. I am induced on this occasion to make the declaration that I look upon General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis as my accusers. I cannot press this in the direct letter of the law, but in my conscience I regard them as such, and I will give my reasons for it.' He pointed out that it was not the duty belonging to a Councillor of State to make himself the carrier of a letter which would have been much more properly committed to the hands of a peon, or delivered by the writer of it to the Secretary. He observed on the acknowledgement of Francis that he knew the letter contained a charge. He added that he had himself been shown a paper containing many accusations against him, which he was told had been carried by Nuncoomar to Monson, and that Nuncoomar was employed for some hours in private with Monson, explaining the nature of these charges[1]. He ended by

[1] Monson attempted to deny this by saying that he never heard or saw any paper in Persian or other native language which contained

stating his inflexible determination not to suffer the indignity of allowing Nuncoomar to accuse him before the Council. 'The chief of this Administration, your superior, gentlemen, appointed by the Legislature itself, shall I sit at this Board to be arraigned in the presence of a wretch whom you all know to be one of the basest of mankind? Shall I sit to hear men collected from the dregs of the people give evidence at his dictation against my character and conduct? I will not. You may, if you please, form yourselves into a committee for the investigation of these matters, in any manner which you may think proper, but I repeat that I will not meet Nuncoomar at this Board, nor suffer Nuncoomar to be examined at the Board, nor have you a right to it, nor can it serve any other purpose than that of vilifying and insulting me.'[1]

Nevertheless the majority, disregarding this protest, carried a resolution that Nuncoomar be called before the Board, whereupon the Governor-General declared the Council dissolved, and protested that anything done during his absence would be illegal and unwarranted. He and Barwell then left the room.

Clavering was thereupon voted to the chair by his two colleagues, Nuncoomar was called in and was desired to deliver to the Board what he had to say in support of his charge against the Governor-General. After declaring that his reputation had been hurt by the Governor receiving into his presence Juggut Chund and Mohun Persaud, two persons of low repute, and refusing admission to him, Nuncoomar said: 'Everything is contained in the letter which I have given in, besides which I have papers which, if the Board orders me, I will deliver up.' He then handed in the translation of what purported to be a letter from

accusations against the Governor-General. But Sir James Stephen points out that Monson thus admits a conversation with Nuncoomar, and does not deny that he might have seen or heard something in English.

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 306.

Munny Begum, dated September 2, 1772. In it the Begum states that in gratitude for her advancement to the Nizamut she offered Mr. Hastings a present of a lac of rupees. Mr. Hastings refused, but when she pressed the matter he said that Nuncoomar had promised two lacs. 'I guessed, my friend, that this two lacs was a part of the three lacs about which I wrote to you in a letter I despatched with Kaim Beg, and of which I sent you word by Juggut Chund.'[1] The Begum proceeds to state that she feared if she said anything about the matter 'all that your kindness had done for me would be entirely destroyed and lose its effect'. She therefore sent word to the Governor that she had given Nuncoomar a general authority 'to do whatever was judged requisite and expedient for my advancement and the fooling of my enemies', and that she considered herself bound to discharge what Nuncoomar promised. 'I therefore begged that he would accept one lac of rupees here, and told him that I would draw upon you for the other lac which I would deliver to him at Calcutta. I was so fortunate to meet with the Governor's concurrence in this proposal. Your interest and mine are the same, and we are partners of each other's prosperity and adversity. Presuming upon this, I request that you will lend me upon honour the sum of one lac of rupees, which you will be kind enough to pay to the Governor when he returns to Calcutta. I am raising one lac of rupees which I shall here present to the Governor, and shall repay the sum with which I depend upon you supplying me in a few days by the means of Rajah Goordas. I earnestly intreat that you will not upon this occasion entertain any doubt of me.'[2] The letter closes with a strong injunction to secrecy.

[1] Sir James Stephen remarks: 'This allusion was not explained by Nuncoomar, nor did he produce any letter as being the one referred to.' Nor, it may be added, did any one of the three members of Council ask a question concerning it. See *Story of Nuncoomar*, by Sir James Stephen.

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 309.

Sir James Stephen, commenting on this letter, says: 'The only questions put to Nuncoomar by the Council were either trivial or were questions which he must have suggested himself, though if they had allowed themselves time to study the letter said to be written by the Begum, and to compare it with the written accusation of Nuncoomar, the Council must have perceived that on several points there was urgent need for inquiry. The story told in the letter does not on the face of it agree with the charge made by Nuncoomar. Nuncoomar said he had given Hastings in gold 104,105 rupees, and that the Munny Begum had given him at Moorshedabad a lac, and had caused Nur Singh to pay him a lac and a half more, making in all 354,104 rupees. The letter says that the Munny Begum was to pay two lacs, and that she was raising one lac to pay it to Hastings at Moorshedabad, and it begs Nuncoomar to pay the other lac to Hastings at Calcutta, and promises to repay him. . . . Apart from this the majority of the Council did not observe the most obvious and common precautions. They took no steps to ascertain the authenticity of the letter attributed to the Munny Begum beyond comparing the inscriptions on two seals. They did not even impound the alleged original, but returned it to Nuncoomar.'[1]

It is observed in the Introduction to the *State Papers*: The Board did not cross-examine Nuncoomar as to the time and place where the gold was delivered, the persons from whom he got so large a sum, the books in which he had made entries about it, the place and time of his alleged conversation with Hastings on the subject, or any of the other obvious matters by which his truthfulness might be justified.[2]

The three members of the Council, acting by themselves, had however no hesitation in resolving, on the sole evidence of Nuncoomar, that the sums named by him had been

[1] Stephen, p. 58 et seq.
[2] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xxxviii.

paid to the Governor-General, and that he (Hastings) be requested to pay them into the Company's treasury. Moreover, it was ordered that the proceedings of the Council and all the papers relating thereto should be sent to London, that the Company might file a bill against Hastings and recover the money. But the only result of this move was that the law-officers of the Company, when the papers were submitted to them, declared that the information of Nuncoomar, even upon the *ex parte* case before them, could not possibly be true. It would have been difficult for any other opinion to have been arrived at by men trained to deal with evidence, or indeed by any men, lawyers or other, accustomed to use their common sense in judging of facts before them.

Yet Burke afterwards asked: 'If therefore Rajah Nuncoomar was a man equal in rank according to the idea of the country in which he lived to any peer in the House, as sacred as a bishop, of as much gravity and authority as a judge, and who was prime minister in the country in which he lived, with what face can Mr. Hastings call this man a wretch, and say that he will not suffer him to be brought before him?' The preceding pages, it is submitted, have given reasons enough why the Governor-General should have refused to be charged at his own Council by a man who had been proved to have forged letters with the villainous purpose of ruining an innocent person, a man whose character was so infamous that the appointment of his son to a public office was objected to in the Council on the ground of the baseness of his father.

The rhetorical utterance of Burke may be taken as a tolerably fair sample of the style which distinguished his impeachment oratory. But what amazes us is that the three members of Council should have thought it within the bounds of reason or of decency, acting on the evidence of a confessed accomplice, of a miscreant known as such to the whole community, native and European, among whom he lived, to condemn their own superior officer, the head of

the administration under which they served, the statesman chosen by Parliament, named by statute as Governor-General, and known, as his past services and his daily exertions proved,[1] to be the most able, the most accomplished, and by far the most experienced, of all Anglo-Indian officials. The malignity and insolence of such a proceeding were, perhaps, even surpassed by its folly.

The truth is that such a line of conduct would seem incredible were it not for the irrefragable testimony borne by the Minutes of Council at this juncture. Many of these entries have never been before the public, and space prevents complete quotation here. But as samples it may be pointed out that these gentlemen stated in one Minute 'there is no form of peculation from which the honourable Governor-General has thought it reasonable to abstain'. In another they observed that Nuncoomar's discoveries explained how the Governor-General had amassed £400,000, 'which he is said to possess,' in two and a half years. This of the man who, having formerly served during a period of almost unexampled corruption, had passed through it admittedly with clean hands, and had returned to England in 1764 with no more than a modest competence, when so many had come home with large fortunes. Such wild accusations compel the belief that nothing short of a covert conspiracy existed to drive Warren Hastings from office by any means available, whether fair or unfair, open or underhand. Such seems to be the opinion of Sir Alfred Lyall.[2]

[1] Macaulay points out that even at this juncture Warren Hastings 'continued to take the lead at the Council Board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided, both surely and speedily, many questions which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling.'—*Essay*.

[2] 'It could never have been the intention of the English Ministry or the Court of Directors, when they appointed Hastings by name in the statute as Governor-General, and prescribed unity and concord as the primary condition of success, that the first use to be made of these powers should be an attempt by his colleagues to prosecute

Throughout these trying scenes of insult and defamation the Governor-General preserved a rare self-control which often baffled, though it could not disarm, his persecutors. It was a patience which proved at once his strength of mind and his conscious innocence. But his written communications with the Directors of the Company show his sense of the monstrous injustice that was done. In a letter to the Directors dated February 22, 1775, enclosing answers to a Minute written by Clavering, Monson, and Francis, 'a performance of so virulent a nature, I confess I scarce find myself equal to a reply,' he says: 'Were the charges contained in it against me explicit and direct, I might quote your records. I might appeal to facts in refutation of them, but dark allusions, mysterious insinuations, bitter invective and ironical reflections are weapons to which I have been but little accustomed before the formation of the present Council, and I am equally unacquainted with the arms by which I am to defend myself against them. I have been often engaged in contests at this Board from the year 1760 to this time, and have been too frequently compelled to fill many pages of your records with controversial discussions, but I dare boast that there is not a passage, nor even a word in any of them, intended to cast an oblique reflection on any man, nor an allegation not openly stated and supported by proofs or circumstances which in my conscience I believe to amount to proofs. The rule which I observe to others I require for myself, and in this instance I require no more than common justice.'[1]

And the concluding sentence of his dispatch, commenting on and replying to the accusations of his opponents, runs as follows: 'My situation is truly painful and mortifying, deprived of the powers with which I have been invested by a solemn Act of the Legislature, ratifying your choice

him publicly, to annul his powers, and degrade his office.'—Lyall, p. 63.

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 267.



PORTRAIT OF WARREN HASTINGS

By Sir Joshua Reynolds. (Taken on his first return to England.)

To face p. 64.

of me to fill the first office in this Administration, denied the respect which is due to my station and character, denied even the rights of personal civility by men with whom I am compelled to associate in the daily course of official business, and condemned to bear my share in the responsibility of measures which I do not approve, I should long since have yielded up my place in this disgraceful scene, did not my ideas of my duty to you and a confidence in your justice animate me to persevere; and if your records must be dishonoured and your interests suspended by the continuance of such contests as have hitherto composed the business of your present Council, it shall be my care to bear as small a part in them as possible, making the line of my duty, exempt from every personal consideration in this, as in every other concern incident to my station, the sole guide of my conduct if I can.'[1]

Soon after the open quarrel in the Council over Nuncoomar's accusation, a circumstance occurred which, though not very important in itself, throws a noticeable light on the character and conduct of that virulent accuser on the one hand, and of Warren Hastings on the other. On the 19th of April one Kamal-u-din had gone to the Governor-General and complained that Nuncoomar and a Mr. Fowke had compelled him by threats to sign a petition stating that he had bribed Hastings and Barwell, and had also forced him to acknowledge the correctness of a certain account. The Governor-General referred Kamal-u-din to the Chief Justice, and Sir Elijah Impey and the other Judges, acting in the capacity of Justices of the Peace (as the Judges of the Supreme Court did at that time) summoned the parties and held an examination of the witnesses and defendants. They then asked Hastings and Barwell if they meant to prosecute. On their determining to do so, Fowke, Nuncoomar, and a native called Radachurn, were committed to trial for conspiracy and admitted to bail. At the Assizes all the defendants were acquitted of the charge of con-

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 279.

spiracy against Hastings, Radachurn was acquitted and Nuncoomar and Fowke were convicted of conspiracy against Barwell. Fowke[1] was fined fifty rupees. No sentence was passed on Nuncoomar because he was then lying in the common gaol under sentence of death for forgery.

Now when Nuncoomar was before the Council, having handed in the alleged letter of the Munny Begum, and answered some questions put to him, he was asked if he had any more papers to produce. He replied, 'I have no more papers.' Possibly he thought that something more might help him, and a short time after he was extorting by threats from Kamal-u-din a petition to the Council stating that he (Kamal-u-din) had bribed Hastings and Barwell. The equal of peers, bishops, and judges was busy at his accustomed work.

On the other hand, the promptitude and fearlessness which Warren Hastings showed in at once referring Kamal-u-din to the Judges, and at once resolving to prosecute, were in themselves proofs that he had no intention, as he had no need, to instigate proceedings against Nuncoomar covertly. What he did he did openly; courage in action was the characteristic of the man.

It is rather significant that Macaulay makes no mention of this charge of conspiracy. Possibly he thought that to notice it might destroy the dramatic effect of his narrative, in which he tells us that—'On a sudden Calcutta was astounded by the news that Nuncoomar had been taken up on a charge of felony, committed, and thrown into the common gaol. The crime imputed to him was that six years before he had forged a bond. The ostensible prosecutor was a native. But it was then, and still is, the opinion of everybody, idiots and biographers excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business.' When this committal (of which an account will immediately be given) took place, Nuncoomar was already, with others, under

[1] It was probably considered by the Court that Fowke was a mere tool.

a charge of conspiracy and about to be tried for it, as was of course well known to the whole community of Calcutta. It was also well known that Hastings and Barwell were prosecutors in the case, and it is hardly credible that any astoundment could have been caused by the arrest of Nuncoomar, well known as an adept at forgery, on a further charge for that offence. The history of the charge is as follows:—

It will be remembered that Nuncoomar prefaced his accusation before the Board by declaring that his reputation had been hurt by the admission of Mohun Persaud to the presence of the Governor-General,[1] while he (Nuncoomar) was refused admittance. This Mohun Persaud was attorney to a certain Bolakee Dass, a native banker, who had died in 1769. On the settlement of his affairs a few months afterwards Nuncoomar produced a bond signed, or supposed to have been signed, by Bolakee Dass, purporting to be the acknowledgement of a debt due to Nuncoomar, and this bond was settled by the executors. On the amount being paid, Nuncoomar cancelled the bond by tearing it downwards at the top for a couple of inches. This document and others relating to the deceased banker were lodged in the Mayor's Court at Calcutta as a Court of Record. In the year 1772 a suit was instituted against Nuncoomar for more than a lac of rupees said to be due to the estate of the banker on account of bonds of the Company. The Court recommended that the case should be referred to arbitration, but this Nuncoomar refused at first, and when he consented a dispute arose as to the arbitration. These facts explain the six years' delay. Matters were in this position when the whole legal and judicial state of things was altered by the arrival of the

[1] Why was this stated to the Council? It could have no bearing on the charge against the Governor-General. But was it that Nuncoomar, with his evil conscience, suspected that Mohun Persaud was stirring about the forged bond, and was uneasy as to what was going to happen?

Supreme Court of Judicature, created by statute, at Calcutta. About a month after its arrival Mr. Farrer, who had landed about the same time and had been admitted as an advocate of the Supreme Court, was informed by Mr. Driver, an attorney, that he had advised a client to institute a criminal prosecution against Nuncoomar for forgery, and that his client had agreed to the advice. There was, however, an obstacle in their way. The original papers, without which the forgery could not be established, were lodged in the Mayor's Court, and though the Court were willing to grant copies, the originals could not be obtained. 'He told me', added Mr. Farrer, 'that the Mayor's Court had not been so entirely free from influence as could be wished when proceeding against men of a certain description, such as Nuncoomar, but that, now that a more independent Court was come out, he should advise his client, Mohun Persaud, to authorize him (Driver) to instruct me to make the same motion before the Supreme Court of Judicature, to wit for the original papers, that he had himself made before without effect in the Mayor's Court.' Mr. Farrer accordingly moved the Court for the papers *six weeks before* Nuncoomar's accusation was produced before the Board by Francis, and was obliged to repeat his application twice before he obtained them. Soon after this, on May 6, 1775, Nuncoomar was charged with forgery before Mr. Justice Le Maistre, who happened to be the sitting magistrate, as at that time (as already mentioned) the Judges of the Supreme Court were also the Justices of the Peace. 'He requested the assistance of Mr. Justice Hyde, who attended with him the whole day upon the examination which lasted from nine in the morning till near ten at night; when, no doubt of his guilt remaining in the heart of either of us upon the evidence on the part of the Crown, a commitment in the usual form was made out.'[1]

It is submitted that the history given above of the committal of Nuncoomar on the charge of forgery absolutely

[1] See *State Papers*, Introd., pp. xli, xlii.

demolishes the statement, made with such confidence by Macaulay, that Warren Hastings was the mover in the business. In the first place, while it is true that the crime charged was six years old, it is also true that the delay in the prosecution was due to the fact that Bolakee Dass himself was dead, and that his executors had believed the bond presented to them to be genuine; the discovery of the forgery grew out of the civil suit instituted in 1772, and proceedings thereupon were long delayed by the difficulty of obtaining the original bond from the Mayor's Court: as soon as Mohun Persaud obtained that document the prosecution was commenced.[1] In the second place, if Farrer's account is to be believed, it was impossible that Warren Hastings could have had any hand in the matter, for there was no motive for his moving in it before Nuncoomar charged him with corruption in the face of the Council, and that charge was not made till six weeks after Farrer moved the Supreme Court for the papers. Is it credible that Farrer was mistaken? He was a counsel of reputation, he was Nuncoomar's advocate at the trial and did his best for his client; and to suppose that his memory could be at fault about such a man and such a case is to suggest the impossible. Warren Hastings himself stated: 'I have declared on oath before the Supreme Court of Justice that I neither advised nor encouraged the prosecution of Maharajah Nuncoomar. It would have ill become the first magistrate in the Settlement to have em-

[1] Sir Alfred Lyall says (p. 66), 'the alleged forgery arose out of a transaction of thirteen years before, and the fact, if true, must have been long known to the complainant.' This is a misconception. The 'thirteen years' is impossible, for Bolakee Dass died in 1769, and as Mohun Persaud was his attorney, and no doubt advised the executors, they would not have paid the bond if he had then known of the forgery. The facts most probably came to his knowledge during the civil suit begun in 1772, and it is shown in the text that as soon as Mohun Persaud got hold of the original papers he moved at once in the prosecution. The crime itself could not have been more than six years old.

ployed his influence either to promote or dissuade it.' Macaulay, we must presume, chose to disbelieve this solemn assertion; but an impartial reader, with the full facts before him, can hardly fail to see its truth. It is clear enough that 'idiots and biographers' were right, and that the brilliant essayist who could not stoop to verify his facts was wrong.

On the committal of Nuncoomar by the Judges the majority in the Council at once and ostentatiously took sides with him. He petitioned the Council to interfere, alleging that he could not perform the offices of his religion and could not eat in the place where he was confined. The Governor-General thereupon remarked that he was doubtful of the correctness of the statement, but that he had already ordered some Pundits to attend the Judges and to give their opinions. It turned out that these Pundits did not confirm Nuncoomar, but expressed an opinion that it was much more difficult for a Brahmin to lose caste than he seemed to suppose. Nevertheless the majority insisted on sending for the Sheriff to know on whose authority he had imprisoned Nuncoomar. In this rather foolish inquiry the warrant of commitment signed by two of the Judges was of course produced. When Colonel Monson, in strange ignorance, inquired why the Sheriff had imprisoned Nuncoomar in the common gaol, the opinion of the Chief Justice and the two committing Judges was shown to justify the course pursued. The majority still persisted and addressed the Chief Justice, but Sir Elijah Impey returned a firm and well-worded refusal to interfere, in which he alluded to a report spread in Calcutta, that an attempt would be made to release Nuncoomar by force. According to Macaulay, indeed, Clavering swore that Nuncoomar should, if necessary, be rescued by force even at the foot of the scaffold. But this may be taken as one of the many embellishments with which the famous essay was enriched. Clavering, Monson and Francis, all three made an affidavit, which was sworn before the Governor-General,

denying that any such intention was known to any one of them; and there can be no reason to suggest that Clavering signed his name to a deliberate falsehood.[1] All that can be said with certainty is that at this stage of the proceedings the majority in the Council (always opposed by Hastings and Barwell, who stood up for the independence of the Judicature and the respect due to the Bench) did endeavour, even to the extent of indecency, to interfere with the authority of the Court, and were repelled with dignity and effect by the Judges.

The trial of Nuncoomar began on the 8th of June and continued for no less than seven days. Macaulay, in his usual haphazard way, says that it took place before Sir Elijah Impey and a jury composed of Englishmen. This statement is in itself sufficient to prove that he had never taken the trouble to read the report of the trial. Nuncoomar was tried before a Bench of four Judges, the Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Chambers, Mr. Justice Le Maistre, and Mr. Justice Hyde. The jury was composed of European (not all necessarily English) inhabitants of Calcutta, some of whom had been long resident therein, and some born there. Durham was counsel for the Crown, and Farrer (described on authority as the ablest advocate at the Bar) appeared for the defendant. A verdict of guilty was returned, and Nuncoomar was sentenced to death. Farrer, on return of the verdict, had made a motion for arrest of judgement, which was refused by the full Court. A petition for leave to appeal was also presented, but it was rejected on the ground that it did not contain any specific reasons why an appeal should be allowed. An effort was made to obtain the signatures of the jury to a prayer for respite, but only one juryman could be persuaded to sign. Lastly, Farrer wrote a petition to the Governor-General in Council, to be signed by Nuncoomar, in the hope that this petition might be endorsed by the Council and forwarded to the Court. But the three members of the

[1] A facsimile of this affidavit will be found in *State Papers*, Vol. I.

majority had now altered their tone. Whether the evidence given at the trial had caused them to change their opinion, whether they thought they had gone too far in their insolence towards the Supreme Court, or whether they perceived that the bulk of the community, European and Native, were against them, it would be impossible to say. Certain it is that they declined to aid Nuncoomar any further. When his petition was presented to the Council they refused to entertain it, Clavering assigning as a reason 'that it had no relation whatever to the public concerns of the country, which alone he was sent out to transact, and that he would not make any application in favour of a man who had been found guilty of forgery; nor indeed did he think that it would do any good.' Nuncoomar also sent a pathetic letter to Francis praying him to procure a respite till the King's pleasure could be known. But Francis, who, to aid his own malignity against the Governor-General, had been willing to back Nuncoomar as accuser, though assuredly knowing his evil character, now turned a deaf ear and left the suppliant to his fate. On August 8, 1775, Nuncoomar was hanged.

It is probable that the account given by Macaulay of the horror and consternation caused by the execution is much exaggerated. The Hindoos of Bengal had been too long under the rule of their Mahomedan conquerors to be greatly affected by the sight of a high-caste Brahmin being put to death. But no doubt there was a strong feeling that the sentence was severe, and that at any rate a respite ought to have been granted. In this feeling most persons will now concur. Nuncoomar was a very bad man; possibly the worst of his race in that generation.[1] He had

[1] Macaulay says of Nuncoomar: 'The Company's servants had repeatedly detected him in the most criminal intrigues. On one occasion he brought a false charge against another Hindoo, and tried to substantiate it by producing forged documents. On another occasion it was discovered that while professing the warmest attachment to the English, he was engaged in several conspiracies against them, and in particular that he was the medium of a correspondence

been the promoter of a villainous conspiracy to bring about the ruin and death of a fellow countryman by forging treasonable letters in his name, and contriving that these should be discovered. A native historian of reputation states that in Nuncoomar's drawers, after his death, were discovered copies of the seals of rich merchants and other notables of Bengal, available for his nefarious practices. It is certain that he forged the letter, alleged to be from the Munny Begum, which he sent to Warren Hastings in Madras. It is just as certain, though Macaulay, without giving any reason, tried to throw doubt on the fact, that he also forged the letter, alleged to be from the Begum, which he produced before the Council. The Munny Begum, on hearing of the charge against the Governor-General, declared that the writing and the seal were forgeries. For saying this she was iniquitously deprived, by the majority of the Council, of her guardianship of the Nawab, which they bestowed on Rajah Goordas, son of Nuncoomar. When that 'wretch', as Warren Hastings rightly termed him, mounted the scaffold, he well deserved his fate. But English justice does not recognize the idea that a man should be hanged because his character and history may show that he deserves it. He can be hanged for nothing but for the crime of which he has been convicted; and though Nuncoomar's trial was absolutely fair (as it was certain to be before a Bench of English Judges) and though the verdict was just upon the facts proved, and the sentence legal under the statute, it cannot be denied that a respite, to ascertain the pleasure of the Crown, would have been advisable. Not that any rational person, as we conceive, can agree with the exaggerated language of Macaulay when he says that the crime for which Nuncoomar was to die was regarded by Hindoos in much the same light in which the selling of an unsound horse for a sound price is regarded by a Yorkshire jockey. It is probable, perhaps

between the Court of Delhi and the French authorities in the Carnatic.'—*Essay*.

certain, that the theory of Hindoo ethics differs in many respects from English ideas; but it is to be observed that in all ages and all countries the standard of mercantile morality has attached high regard to the sanctity of pecuniary contracts; and it is impossible to believe that in the great trading centre of Calcutta the native merchants and bankers thought no more of the forgery of a bond than they did of sharp practice in the sale of a horse. Nevertheless, the enforcement of the capital sentence under a statute passed to apply to England, in accordance with English views, on a native of Bengal was excessive. But it is easy to understand that Sir Elijah Impey, an ordinary English lawyer, with no wide views, made obstinate, as is probable enough, by the attitude of the majority in the Council, was likely to insist on the strict letter of the law.

Of course Francis, we say Francis because he was throughout the moving spirit of the three, and we say of course because his whole conduct betrayed his inveterate hostility to the Governor-General, declared that Nuncoomar had been put to death under a conspiracy between Hastings and Impey. The charge was false, like other charges brought by Francis; just as false as the assertion that Warren Hastings was the mover in the prosecution. But Macaulay adopted it, at any rate as against Impey, and seems to have believed that he proved it by quoting words used by Warren Hastings in subsequent years, when speaking of Impey as the man 'to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honour, and reputation'. To this quotation Macaulay added: 'These strong words can refer only to the case of Nuncoomar, and they must mean that Impey hanged Nuncoomar in order to support Hastings. It is, therefore, our deliberate opinion that Impey, sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.'

As far as the conduct of Impey is in judgement (though with that we have no direct concern) it may be sufficient to refer the reader to Sir James Stephen's *Story of*

Nuncoomar, an admirable exposition of the whole tragedy, in which the innocence of both the Chief Justice and the Governor-General is conclusively proved. But in respect to the words used by Warren Hastings, it is certain that Macaulay, with regard to them, fell into one of his many rash mistakes. These words were used in reference to the attempt made by Clavering and Francis to seize the reins of Government on the pretext that Warren Hastings (owing to a resignation handed to the Directors in London by his agent and disavowed by him) was no longer Governor. At that momentous crisis, big with the fate of British India, which brought out conspicuously the high qualities of Warren Hastings, he, after telling the army to obey no orders but his, and thus defeating Clavering's attempt to possess himself of Fort William, calmly offered his angry and storming colleagues to refer the question between them to the arbitrament of the Supreme Court. They were reluctantly compelled to accept the offer, as they dared not face the consequences of refusal. The reference was made, and the Chief Justice, with the other Judges, gave a unanimous decision in favour of the Governor-General. It was to this, and in no way to the Nuncoomar business, that Warren Hastings alluded, when he expressed his lasting obligations to Sir Elijah Impey.

The whole story, as told by Macaulay, is more than inaccurate; it bears the character of fiction. He starts with the assumption, for which no evidence of any kind is produced, that Impey, an old schoolfellow of Warren Hastings, had at once on landing in Calcutta become the obsequious tool of the Governor-General, and had entered into a conspiracy to rid him of Nuncoomar by corruptly using the powers of the Supreme Court for that purpose. When stating this, Macaulay had either failed to perceive or had purposely passed over, the fact that the trial, in all its stages, was conducted not by Impey alone, but in unison with three other Judges; and his statement therefore amounts to this, that four English gentlemen, in a high

judicial position, combined together to do not only a corrupt but also a most wicked thing. The history of the English Bench, and we may truly say the nature of English character, forbid belief in such a story.

Pitt, after hearing the facts, in connexion with the proposed impeachment of Impey, declared his opinion in the House that there was not a shade of solid proof for such a charge. It has been shown that the prosecution for forgery was commenced by Mohun Persaud before the accusation against Warren Hastings came before the Council, and therefore before the Governor-General could have had any motive in the matter. The suggestion made by Sir Alfred Lyall that some hint might have been given to Mohun Persaud is just as impossible as is the broader accusation; for there could be no reason to give any such hint at the time when Mohun Persaud obtained the incriminating papers, which indeed he had been trying to do long before. It is to be regretted that Sir Alfred Lyall made any such suggestion, seeing that it directly conflicts with his own words two pages earlier in his book: 'It may be accepted, upon Sir James Stephen's authority, that no evidence can be produced to justify conclusions adverse to the innocence of Hastings upon a charge that has from its nature affected the popular tradition regarding him far more deeply than the accusations of high-handed oppressive political transactions, which are little understood and leniently condemned by the English at large. There is really nothing to prove that he had anything to do with the prosecution, or that he influenced the sentence.'[1] That is all true; but it is not quite the whole truth; the case does not rest on a negative; in the preceding pages it has been shown that strong positive proof has come to light of the absolute innocence of Warren Hastings of any part in the prosecution. With the sentence he had no power to interfere, the Supreme Court being, by the terms of the

[1] Lyall, p. 70.

statute which created it, absolutely independent of the Bengal executive.

The story, in its origin, was the invention of Philip Francis, whose disappointed ambition bred in his rancorous nature a hatred and revenge which dogged Warren Hastings for years in Calcutta and at home. It was used in the attempted impeachment of Impey, and was discredited in the House of Commons. It was revived by Macaulay to add a deeper dramatic effect to a rhetorical essay, and, like many other falsities it has been widely accepted as truth, because it appeals to that love of the sensational which is inherent in the nature of mankind.[1]

[1] Macaulay's account was certainly taken from Sir Gilbert Elliott's speech on the proposal to impeach Impey; and that speech bears internal evidence that it was inspired, if not actually composed, by Francis.

CHAPTER IV

MAHRATTA WAR. WAR WITH FRANCE. INTERNAL DISSENSIONS.

IN the struggle over Nuncoomar the hostile majority had been signally worsted. They were at first completely silenced, though in a few months' time (January 25) they entered on the records of the Council a minute signed by all three (but obviously written by Francis) declaring with some malice of expression that no man who had any regard for his own safety would venture to stand forth as accuser of the Governor-General.[1] No doubt it had been borne in on the Native mind that it might be safer to be in a minority with Warren Hastings than in a majority with his opponents. But there was something more. The European inhabitants of Calcutta and settlers in Bengal had perceived the blunders committed by the faction in the Council. They knew well the improvements in administration that had been carried out by Warren Hastings, and which had been swept away by the ignorant folly of his enemies. Not only had those three upset the arrangements made with the Vizier,[2] and thus imperilled, as the Governor-General had prophesied, the security of our north-western frontier, but they had restored the double government with all its corruption and inefficiency,

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 476.

[2] The policy of the Council majority towards the Oude Vizier had proved ruinous to their ally; for owing to his mutinous army, his powerful and intractable mother, and the incessant demands made on him by the British Resident for arrears of debt, Asaph-u-Dowla's predicament was most distressful; and the whole country appears, by the description given in the letters from the Resident of Lucknow, to have been falling away into masterless confusion.—Lyall, p. 74.

placing Reza Mahomed Khan once more at its head, and had reversed Warren Hastings' statesmanlike legislation concerning the Courts of Justice. Life and property became as insecure as before, and bands of robbers again appeared in the confines of Calcutta.[1] It may seem scarcely credible that such ruinous steps could have been taken by any sane persons occupying a responsible position; but their blind hatred of the Governor-General had deprived the three malcontents alike of prudence and reason. Happily for British interests, imperilled by temper and incompetence, the hour was soon to strike when the authority of the great Indian statesman would be restored. But before that day came their pernicious opposition was to manifest itself in foreign relations.

At the end of May, 1775, a dispatch reached Calcutta from Bombay, announcing that the Government of that Presidency had concluded a treaty with a Mahratta chief, one Raghoba, who was a claimant to the office of Peishwa[2], by which he agreed to cede the island of Salsette, and also the town of Bassein, to the English, on the condition that they would use their power to restore him to Poona. The acquisition of Salsette was most important, for the Portuguese had designs upon it, and it is so close to Bombay that part of the city is now built thereon. But this advantage did not blind the Governor-General to the imprudence of the transaction, and he at once pronounced the treaty unseasonable, impolitic, unjust and unauthorized.[3] 'It is unseasonable

[1] The conduct of the three Members of Council was the more inexcusable, because at the first meeting of the new Council, held on October 25, 1774, the Governor-General laid before his colleagues an able Minute, worded in a conciliatory spirit, on the revenue and politics of the country. He explained the mode he had adopted for the collection of the revenue, and earnestly advised its continuance. —*State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 115.

[2] That is, to the virtual headship of the Mahratta confederacy.

[3] It is significant that the Managers of the Impeachment, who vehemently attacked Warren Hastings for the subsequent war with the Mahrattas, never noticed his Minute condemning the Bombay

because the treaty was formed with Raghoba at a time in which he appears to have been totally abandoned by his former adherents. It was impolitic because it threw the whole burden of the war on the Company without a force at the command of the Presidency equal to the undertaking, without money or certain resources, and because it was undertaken without any regard to the general interests of the other settlements of the Company in India. It was unjust because they had received no injury from any part of the Mahratta State which could authorize their interfering in their mutual dissensions, nor were under any actual ties to assist Raghoba.' But though he thus condemned the treaty, Warren Hastings was far too much of a statesman to suppose that he could disregard accomplished facts, or could extricate himself abruptly from the complications in which his rash subordinates had involved him. He proposed to the Council: 'That the President and Council of Bombay be peremptorily enjoined to cancel the treaty with Raghoba, and to withdraw the detachment immediately to their own possessions by whatever means may be in their power, unless any of the following cases may have occurred:—

1st. That they shall have obtained any decisive advantage over the enemy;

2nd. That the detachment shall have proceeded to such a distance, or be in such a situation, as to make it dangerous either to retreat or to go on;

3rd. That a negotiation shall have taken place between Raghoba and his opponents in consequence of the support afforded by this alliance.'[1]

There can be no real doubt of the wisdom of this proposal; it covered the retreat of the Bombay Government

expedition in aid of Raghoba. This shows the tone and temper of the proceedings; to rake up everything against the accused, and to keep back everything in his favour. Few impartial inquirers can doubt that the Impeachment was engineered by personal malice.

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 392.

if they found their expedition to be a failure; it gave them the option to stand firm if they scored a success. But Francis at once opposed it, and the majority (following his lead as usual) resolved: 'That the troops be ordered to be recalled without any exception but the single consideration of their safety.' The consequences were most unfortunate. Before the dispatch arrived at Bombay a hard-fought battle had been won at Arras, and the moral effect of this success, if the position had been maintained, would have powerfully aided the British diplomacy; but the Government of Bombay, though their President wrote a dignified protest, felt bound to obey the instructions they had received; they withdrew their troops from Mahratta territory, and the advantage gained was totally lost. It was in vain that the Supreme Government dispatched a special agent (Colonel Upton) to Poona to negotiate, for the Mahratta ministers now demanded impossible terms; and when the Calcutta Council at last consented to a bolder policy, and empowered the Bombay Government to renew the war, it was too late; the treaty of Purandhar had been signed (March 1, 1776) and Warren Hastings could do nothing but state his disapproval of its conditions. No better example could be given of the mischief wrought by the persistent and factious opposition waged in his own Council against the Governor-General. Taking this particular case; to that opposition were largely due the losses and anxieties of the prolonged war which two years later broke out with the Mahrattas.

But before that peril was encountered the act of God intervened for the salvation of our country's interests in the East. In September, 1776, Colonel Monson died. This event at once reversed the political conditions in the Council. The number being reduced to four, Hastings and Barwell were equal to Francis and Clavering, and the casting vote lay with the Governor-General. He at once acted with his usual energy. He swept away the paltry proceedings of his opponents, with their fatuous policy and their evil administration; he once more abolished the double govern-

ment, and made the British rule sole and undivided through the Bengal Presidency; he re-established the provincial Courts, and enforced law and order under his sway. The whole fabric of British administration and British justice now supreme over two hundred millions of our Indian fellow-subjects, to their immeasurable benefit, has been built on the foundations laid by Warren Hastings as soon as his assailants' clamour was silenced and his own hands were untied. He also did his best to reinstate the good understanding with the ruler of Oude, and to ensure a safe policy on the frontier, by recalling the nominee of the late majority, and replacing in the Residency his own tried and approved subordinate, Mr. Middleton.

It was indeed time that adequate power should be restored to the Executive. In 1778 a French agent[1] appeared at the Court of the Peishwa, and was received with effusion by one of the Mahratta statesmen who was powerful in the Ministry at Poona. Fortunately another of the officials, who had negotiated the treaty of Purandhar, took the opposite line and made overtures to the Bombay Government for the restoration of Raghoba. That Government at once passed a resolution approving of the course proposed, and forwarded a copy thereof to the Governor-General. Then was seen the advantage of the changed position in the Council. Francis vehemently opposed the resolution as illegal, unjust, and impolitic; illegal because it had not the sanction of the supreme authority; unjust because it was contrary to the treaty; impolitic because it involved the Company in the dangers and burdens of war. He had perhaps forgotten that the present difficulty had arisen because he and his colleagues (then both living) had opposed and defeated at the outset the wise policy of Warren Hastings. But now the Governor-General had the power in his hands, and he stood firm. He said, in the spirit of true statesmanship, that the emergency justified the illegality. He pointed out that if they were acting contrary to the treaty they were

[1] The Chevalier de St. Lubin.

doing so at the instance of the minister who had negotiated that treaty. He knew what was meant by the presence of a French agent in Poona; he forecast the possibilities of a French alliance with the Mahrattas. He moved, and by his casting vote he carried a resolution authorizing the President and Council at Bombay to carry out the policy they proposed, granting to them a sum of ten lacs of rupees, and sending to their aid a military force under Colonel Leslie. It was a bold move, and had it been possible to take it earlier it might have averted many misfortunes, but this had not been possible while the triumvirate still held power. It is sufficient, in proof of this, to say that no sooner did a letter from Leslie reach Calcutta mentioning that some slight resistance was offered by the Mahrattas to his advance, than Francis at once moved that 'the expedition be absolutely countermanded, and Colonel Leslie's command of course dissolved as soon as he has quartered his troops on this side the Jumna'.[1] Such and no less was the persistent faction of the man!

But at this moment there came news from Bombay calculated to silence the disputants. 'It is with much concern,' wrote the Government of the Presidency, 'we acquaint you that by the *London Gazette* of the 16th December just received from Bassora, we learn that General Burgoyne, with his whole army of 3,500 fighting men, was compelled to surrender to General Gates on the 14th of October on the condition of being transported to England from Boston, and not to serve again in America during the war. General Howe remains in possession of Philadelphia, with which place the fleet have in vain endeavoured to open a communication, and three of our ships have been destroyed in the attempts. General Washington was encamped within a few miles of Philadelphia, &c.'[2]

A crisis of this sort, big with the fate of empires, brings out the qualities of politicians. Let us see who was the man capable of saving British India, and resolute to do so;

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 623. [2] Ibid., p. 630.

and who, if he could have had his way, would have lost it. Francis, on receipt of the news, at once took the line of political cowardice. He begged his colleagues to consider 'whether the unfortunate event in America ought not to have a general influence upon our measures here, whether this be a season for hazarding offensive operations of any kind, and whether policy and prudence do not plainly dictate to us that while the nation is so deeply engaged and pressed on one side, with everything to apprehend from the designs of France and Spain on the other, we should stand on our defence, and not weaken or divide the force on which the safety of Bengal may depend'.[1]

But to this counsel of despair Warren Hastings at once replied with force and dignity: 'I hope that our affairs in America are not in the desperate situation in which they are described to be; but I see no connexion between them and the concerns of this Government; much less can I agree that with such superior advantages as we possess over every power which can oppose us, we should act merely on the defensive and abruptly stop the operation of a measure of such importance to the national interests and to the national safety as that in which we have now decidedly engaged, with the eyes of all India turned upon it. On the contrary, if it be really true that the British arms and influence have suffered so severe a check in the Western world, it is the more incumbent on those who are charged with the interest of Great Britain in the East to exert themselves for the retrieval of the national loss.'[2]

These were the words of a great Englishman, bent on doing his duty as ruler of India and determined to maintain, as far as in him lay, the interests and the honour of his country. They were a prophecy of the events that followed. In other quarters of the globe, during that long and deadly struggle, England lost territory and had much ado to keep her flag flying; but in the East the genius and courage of Warren Hastings upheld her supremacy and brought

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 632. [2] Ibid., p. 632.

her, through much tribulation, to ultimate triumph and peace.[1]

On July 7, 1778, the news arrived that France had declared war against England. The Governor-General at once held a Council and proposed, among other things, that Rajah Cheit Sing (of Benares) should be required to raise and pay three battalions of Sepoys. Francis was anxious that words should be added to imply that this additional charge upon the Rajah would not be continued after the close of the war. Warren Hastings said at once that such was his own intention; but he refused to add any words of qualification which might throw doubt on the right of the paramount power to make the demand. He always held that the subsidiary States under the Company's rule were liable to extraordinary contributions in case of urgent need; and he carried a resolution 'that the Rajah Cheyt Sing be required in form to contribute his share of the burden of the present war, by the establishment of three regular battalions of Sepoys, to be raised and maintained at his expense, and that the Governor-General be requested to write to him to that effect.'[2] It will be well for the reader to bear this circumstance in mind when we come to some further passages in the history of Cheit Sing.

The Governor-General, who seldom waited for his adversary to strike, at once resolved to seize the French settlements in India. A force was dispatched to Chandernagore, which took possession of the place with no more bloodshed than was caused by one volley from our Sepoys

[1] The anxiety which beset Warren Hastings from the time when a combination of foes were leagued together against our Indian possessions, was expressed by him before the Lords, when he indignantly replied to the unworthy accusations that he had sought emolument for himself in his Governorship. 'I was too intent,' said he, 'upon the means to be employed for preserving India to Great Britain from the hour in which I was informed that France meant to strain every nerve to dispute that Empire with us, to bestow a thought upon myself or my own private affairs.'

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 638–9.

in reply to a discharge of muskets by the French guard at the gates. Both the commandant and the inhabitants protested against what they considered an outrage, but the Governor-General replied that the declaration of war by both England and France left him no alternative, and that he had directed the officer in command of the force employed to treat the inhabitants with all possible tenderness. Instructions were also sent to Madras desiring that immediate steps should be taken to capture Pondicherry and Mahé. The former place capitulated after a resistance so gallant that the garrison were allowed to march out with the honours of war, and to retain their colours. Mahé was also occupied, an event which led to momentous consequences. By the same dispatch from the Madras Government which told of the occupation of Mahé came also a letter from Hyder Ali strongly protesting against an attack on a French factory situated in his dominions.

This new danger added to the Mahratta difficulties. The attempt to push into the heart of the Confederacy's dominion with a small army had ended in disaster. This indeed had been retrieved by General Goddard, a soldier of courage and capacity, who, on hearing of the defeat of the Bombay troops, marched his detachment from Bundelcund to Surat, a distance of three hundred miles, in twenty days, and by his timely arrival saved the Bombay Presidency from the grave danger which threatened it, and restored the reputation of the British arms. The Governor-General directed General Goddard to open a negotiation with the ministers of the Mahratta State on the basis of the Treaty of Purandhar, provided they would recede from their late pretensions, and would agree not to admit any French force to their dominions, nor allow that nation to form any establishment on the Mahratta coast. Peace could not be obtained on these terms, and on January 1, 1780, the war was renewed[1].

But before dealing further with the storm of war which was

[1] For this see *State Papers*, Introd., pp. liv, lv.

now descending upon India, it is requisite to call attention to two dangerous controversies that had arisen among the English authorities themselves. Much has been written on both these topics to incriminate Warren Hastings; but on both, it is submitted, his reputation will stand out unclouded in the eyes of those who will look impartially into the facts.

The Act for regulating the Government of India had been drawn, or at any rate had been passed by Parliament, in a confused fashion which on several points left the intent of the Legislature obscure. This was especially the case with regard to that part of the measure which dealt with the Supreme Court of Judicature. It was clear that the Court was intended to be independent of the Executive; but it was by no means clear what were the intended limits of the Court's authority. It was certain that the Judges had full jurisdiction over what was called the Presidency District, but it was matter of considerable doubt whether their jurisdiction extended into the wide and densely populated territories beyond. It was also dubious how far their admitted independence of the Executive availed them to interfere with administrative acts of the Executive itself. These were questions on which different opinions could be honestly held, questions which would have been best cleared up by the supreme authority at home. Unfortunately the Judges took the ground that they alone had power to construe the Act, that their jurisdiction over the entire territory of the Bengal Government was not to be questioned, and that the millions of the population thereon, inclusive of all officials, were subject to the manifold technicalities of the English law. This astonishing pretension was naturally resisted by the Company's servants, and collisions occurred between the officers of the Supreme Court and the officials of the revenue and other departments. A sort of civil war began, and the service of the Court's process was often openly resisted. The Judges were so ill-advised as to issue writs against the Governor-General

himself, an insult which he treated with just contempt. It is certain that on one occasion an armed band under the orders of the Sheriff was encountered, and of course worsted, by a party of the military acting under the direction of the Executive. Such a state of anarchy could not be permitted to continue. Warren Hastings, who had taken at first a moderate and conciliatory line, in unison with his known opinion that the Crown should exercise more direct authority in India, now declared with determination for the authority of the Council. For once he was unanimously supported by his colleagues, and with the army at his back could easily have defeated the Court. But his just and equal mind prevailed over all provocation. The times were dangerous; the enemy was at the gate; and Warren Hastings, always a statesman, resolved to compromise. To restore peace and unity to the civil authority in Bengal, to leave the hands of Government free to grapple with the war, was the prime necessity. He effected the object with his usual adroitness. He offered to the Chief Justice the control of all the Company's Courts, from the Sudder Adawlut downwards, if he and his colleagues would give up their preposterous claims to interfere with the Executive. The new appointment was to carry a salary of £6,000 a year, and to be tenable at the pleasure of the Governor-General. This last provision fully secured the public interests. The offer was accepted and quiet was restored. Warren Hastings said at the time that he knew the arrangement would be attacked and that he would be abused for having made it. But like a true patriot he faced the blame to secure the safety of the State. His words came true. When the terms of the compact were known at home, great blame was thrown on the Governor-General and the Chief Justice both by Parliament and by the Ministry. Francis had vehemently opposed the arrangement, and it may be well believed that he was at the bottom of the representations made in Downing Street. But it was eminently a case in which the opinion of those on the spot

may be taken as conclusive. In Calcutta the universal feeling, the feeling of Natives and Europeans alike, was that the action of the Governor-General had saved the Presidency from a great danger. All knew that the right thing had been done, and knew also that there was only one man who had the wits and the moral courage to do it. It may be added that Macaulay, who seldom throughout the *Essay* lost an opportunity to condemn Warren Hastings, admits that in this difficult matter the Governor-General acted as a statesman.

Sir Elijah Impey was recalled by a vote of the House of Commons, for his share in the transaction, but nothing was finally pressed home to him; and Sir James Stephen, after a careful consideration of the whole subject, expresses his opinion that there was much to be said for the view taken by the Chief Justice. A greater witness than that accomplished jurist bears even still more convincing testimony. The witness of experience has now for many years shown that the plan for which Impey was recalled and Warren Hastings was abused, that of placing all the country courts in each Presidency under the appellate jurisdiction of the High Court, works well throughout India.[1]

The other controversy, still more serious it may be at the moment, but of much shorter duration, arose out of the alleged resignation of his office by the Governor-General. It is quite true that in 1775 Warren Hastings, under circum-

[1] Sir Alfred Lyall says: 'The measure was at once politic, practical, and effective; it terminated by a master-stroke the conflict of jurisdiction; and it undoubtedly placed all the country courts, which had been dispensing a very haphazard and intuitive kind of justice, for the first time under the control of a person who could guide and control them upon recognized principles . . . Impey accepted the salary subject to refund if the arrangement should be disallowed at home; and he appears to have undertaken the duties in an honourable spirit. . . . The plan of uniting the Chief Justiceship with the superintendency of the district courts, taken on its merits, was a good and practical remedy of existing evils.'—Lyall, p. 115.

This is a much juster estimate of Impey's conduct than that given by Macaulay.

stances of great stress, blamed as he was at home when distance made it difficult for him to answer or explain, thwarted and abused in his Council, and traduced in the dispatches of his opponents, did write to his agent in London, Colonel Maclean, that if he were condemned over the Rohilla war or the Benares treaty, he would leave India at once, and that in the event named Colonel Maclean should send in his resignation. But more than two years had since elapsed, and the circumstances by which the resignation had been conditioned had not occurred. The Directors of the Company had passed a resolution, dubiously worded, on the subject of the Rohilla war, but it could hardly be construed as a vote of censure, and nothing more had followed. The Benares treaty, which had been settled by Warren Hastings himself with the Vizier, and had handed over to that ruler the outlying districts of Korah and Allahabad in exchange for a large sum of money then sorely needed by the Bengal treasury, had not been challenged. Nevertheless, Colonel Maclean, made nervous as it would seem by proceedings in the Commons, and by differences of opinion among the Directors, handed in the resignation, attaching to it the condition that Warren Hastings should be held to retire with honour, and be free from any future molestation. The resignation was thereupon accepted, Mr. Wheler, a member of the Board of Directors, was appointed to succeed, and General Clavering was authorised to assume the position of Governor-General until Wheler should arrive at Calcutta.

The whole circumstances of the case, and especially a letter written by the Governor-General before the events just narrated had happened, expressing his determination not to give up his office unless he were removed by the King, must compel the conclusion that Colonel Maclean exceeded his instructions, and that his act consequently did not bind his principal. It may be taken as certain that Warren Hastings had never thought of resignation from the moment that Monson's death gave him the decisive voice in the Council, and it is quite possible that he may have

forgotten the instruction given to his agent under circumstances past and buried. Any way the heat and aggressiveness exhibited by Clavering must have spurred the Governor-General to resistance. He sat with Barwell in one room; Clavering sat with Francis in another. Each claimed the office and the rule; each issued minutes and notices demanding support and obedience; but there was this decisive difference in their respective positions. Warren Hastings had with him the army, the officials, the people, Native and European, in a word the community. Clavering had no one but Francis. When he demanded the keys of Fort William, the commandant refused to give them up. There was little doubt, if force had been appealed to, what the result would have been. But here, as ever, Warren Hastings showed his temper and his statesmanship. He kept his coolness while his rival stormed. Having made himself secure as to the army, he offered to refer the question between Clavering and himself to the arbitrament of the Supreme Court, and undertook to abide by its decision. Such an offer could not be refused; it was necessarily, though we may be sure with reluctance, accepted. The Judges decided unanimously in favour of the Governor-General, and Clavering, deeply mortified, had to subside into the position of a Councillor. He died a few months after, and from that time till the close of his rule the supremacy of Warren Hastings in his Council was in the main undisputed. It was well for our Indian Empire that this was so, for, had the power fallen into other hands, ruin would at that moment have been imminent. Ordinary men may do well in ordinary times; but with the Mahrattas threatening our borders, Hyder Ali thundering on the Carnatic, and a French squadron in the Indian seas, none but Warren Hastings could save the State.

It only remains, in this chapter, to note the celebrated quarrel between the Governor-General and Philip Francis, which in August, 1780, terminated in a duel. To make the subject clear it is necessary to recall the exact position of

affairs in the Council when this event was brought about. The deaths of Monson and Clavering had left Francis the sole representative of the three members who had so long opposed the Governor-General. Wheler had arrived in expectation of being sworn in for the high office supposed to be vacant, and found that he must content himself with the post of a simple Councillor. It may be easily understood that his temper towards Warren Hastings, whose success had disappointed his hopes, was not amicable; he consequently attached himself to Francis, by whose strong personality he was soon dominated. The voices in the Council were now equal; Hastings and Barwell on one side, Francis and Wheler on the other; Sir Eyre Coote, who had been nominated to succeed Clavering, had not yet arrived; so the casting vote of the Governor-General decided every issue. But Barwell was broken in health, he had made a large fortune, and was anxious to return home, though he loyally hesitated to leave his chief in an embarrassed minority. Francis and Wheler persistently opposed the Governor-General in his conduct of the Mahratta war, and strong Minutes were interchanged on the subject. At a meeting of the Council held on January 20, 1779, Warren Hastings stated (in reference to the intimated retirement of Barwell) that it would be fatal to the success of the Mahratta war if it were known at Poona and Nagpur that the powers of the Government were 'on the eve of devolving on two members who have invariably opposed in every stage of its progress the plan which has been publicly adopted for the support of the Company's interest on the western side of India, and who, it is universally believed, will seize the first means that are offered to them to defeat and annul it altogether.' He added—'A Member of the Government, entrusted with the guardianship of the Company's interests, and of the honour of the British name in India, has not scrupled to propose that we should make an abject submission to the honourable possessors of the feeble Government at Poona, acknowledging our past faults with

a promise of amendment, and humbly entreating their permission for the safe retreat of our army from Berar to its confines.' And he went on—'I do therefore conjure Mr. Barwell, both by that zeal which he has hitherto steadily manifested for the interests of our common masters, and even by the ties of a friendship cemented by the participation of the same labours and sufferings for the public service, that he will not permit the measures in which he has a common and equal responsibility with myself to be exposed to the triumph of a party, but that he will both continue to afford the support of his presence and abilities to the present Government while it yet exists, and that he will suffer me to exact from him a declaration to that purpose, not only for my own satisfaction but for that of every man who has the Company's interests or the prosperity of this settlement or the credit of his country at heart, and who, I presume to say, expects this sacrifice from him.'[1] Barwell, in response to this appeal, declared that—'the reasons that are assigned for it by the Governor-General, require me absolutely to retract my intention. I have declared I admit the force of them, and with pleasure declare my determination to support his Government as long as the public measures of it shall require.' These quotations show the deep sense entertained by Warren Hastings of the danger that would ensue if Francis should by any accident regain a predominant voice in the Council.

Yet not long after this an arrangement was arrived at, it is believed through the mediation of a common friend,[2] under which Francis was to abstain from any general opposition, especially with regard to the conduct of the war, and to receive in return a certain share of Government influence and patronage. Warren Hastings, in a letter written on the 4th of March, quotes the terms of the agreement: 'Mr. Francis will not oppose any measures which the Governor-General shall recommend for the prosecution of the war in which we are supposed to be engaged with

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 633–34. [2] Sir John Day.

the Mahrattas, or for the general support of the present political system of this Government. Neither will he himself either propose or vote with any other member who shall propose any measures which shall be contrary to the Governor-General's opinion on these points.' Nothing could be more explicit; and in consequence of this agreement Barwell, who had been 'privy to the treaty in all stages of it,' left, with Warren Hastings' free consent, for England.

All went smoothly for a time, but when Francis perceived that he had once more the power in his hands if he chose to exercise it, he became aggressive in his demands. The Governor-General was most anxious to bring the Mahratta war to an end, for he foresaw the other dangers that were at hand, and, convinced that it could be ended only by decisive action, designed a diversion in Malwa to draw off the attention of the Mahrattas, and thus enable General Goddard to act vigorously in Berar. This course had been strongly recommended to the Council by the Commander-in-Chief. Francis at once broke out into bitter opposition, and when reproached by Warren Hastings, in fair and moderate language, for his departure from the engagement, he replied that the agreement only referred to the operations already commenced on the Malabar coast. Of course this contention was clearly opposed to the wording of the agreement, but as Francis afterwards denied point-blank that there was any agreement at all, it mattered little what he said on the subject. On June 26, 1780, Warren Hastings wrote:—'If Mr. Francis (I am compelled to speak thus plainly) thinks that he can better and more effectually conduct the war to the termination which we both profess to aim at, and that he can in honour deprive me of the right which I claim to dictate the means of accomplishing it, let him avowedly take the lead; but if I am to be charged with the consequences of it, or if the right which I claim be justly mine, let him allow me to possess and exercise it. It is impossible to combine the principles of enterprise and

inaction in the same general measure; and as impossible for his sentiments and mine to be brought into agreement on the subject of the Mahratta war.'[1] To this Francis replied in a Minute, marked by his undoubted ability, denouncing the whole conduct of the war, and refusing to sanction any measure until a general outline of the whole campaign was submitted to him. Upon this Warren Hastings, seeing that all hope of a compromise was at an end, prepared a powerful Minute dealing with the conduct of Francis, and laid it next day before the Council. After assuming that the Minute signed by Francis and Wheler was written entirely by the former, and expressing his disappointment that the hint he had given had not 'awakened in the breast of Mr. Francis, if it were susceptible of such sensations, a consciousness of the faithless part he was acting,' he went on to say—'I have lately offered various plans for the operations of the war. These have been successively rejected, as I have successively amended and endeavoured to accommodate them to Mr. Francis' objections. I had a right to his implicit acquiescence.' He pointed out that Francis demanded a complete plan of the campaign in every detail, and promised his candid consideration. 'But in truth, I do not trust to his promise of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it, and that his sole purpose and wish are to embarrass and defeat every measure which I may undertake, or which may tend even to promote the public interests, if my credit is connected with them. Such has been the tendency and such the manifest spirit of all his actions from the beginning. Almost every measure proposed by me has for that reason had his opposition to it. When carried against his opposition, and too far engaged to be withdrawn, yet even then and in every stage of it his labours to overcome it have been unremitted, every disappointment and misfortune have been aggravated by him, and every fabricated tale of armies devoted to famine or to massacre have found their first and ready way to his office,

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 701.

where it was known they would meet the most welcome reception.' And he went on to say: 'My authority for the opinion which I have declared concerning Mr. Francis depends upon facts which have passed within my own certain knowledge. I judge of his public conduct by my experience of his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour. This is a severe charge, but temperately and deliberately made from the firm persuasion that I owe this justice to the public and to myself, as the only redress to both, for artifices of which I have been a victim, and which threaten to involve their interests with disgrace and ruin: the only redress for a fraud for which the law has made no provision is the exposure of it.' He then proceeded to quote the first article of the agreement, and he added—'By the sanction of this engagement and the liberal professions which accompanied it, I was induced to part with the friend to whose generous and honourable support steadfastly yielded in a course of six years I am indebted for the existence of the little power which I have ever possessed in that long and disgraceful period, to throw myself on the mercy of Mr. Francis, and on the desperate hazard of his integrity.' [1]

On the rising of the Council Francis handed a challenge to his adversary, which was immediately accepted. The duel took place on August 17, 1780, and Francis was shot through the body, but not mortally. He was able to take his seat at the Council again in September, and he then handed in a Minute denying solemnly that he had ever made the agreement mentioned by Warren Hastings, though admitting that he had agreed to support the existing operations on the Malabar coast. He also denied that the departure of Barwell had anything to do with the matter, but in respect to this last assertion it may be observed that Sir Elijah Impey, in a letter written at the time of the duel, said: 'Mr. Barwell left this country on the strongest assurances that Mr. Francis would coincide

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 712.

with Mr. Hastings, or he would never have gone.' Warren Hastings wrote a Minute in reply, referring to the denial of Francis in these words: 'What can I say to such a declaration but to declare on my part in as solemn a manner that Mr. Francis was a party to the engagement which I have stated? This I now most solemnly declare, and may God be judge between us. He proceeded to give facts and precise dates which seem incontrovertible. But in truth, independent of Minutes and assertions, the notorious facts are against Francis. The Governor-General was safe as long as he had Barwell by his side; Barwell had recorded his determination to stay as long as his presence was required; is it credible that Warren Hastings would have consented to his departure if there had not been an agreement with Francis? The whole controversy is set out in the Introduction to the *State Papers*, and what is the verdict of Mr. Forrest? 'No impartial judge can read the respective minutes of the two men without coming to the conclusion that Francis was guilty of a gross breach of faith.'

Yet Macaulay has left an opinion on the subject which is either astonishing in its bias or else is clear proof that he wrote without informing himself on the facts. 'Then,' says he, 'came a dispute, such as frequently arises even between honourable men, when they may make important agreements by mere verbal communication. An impartial historian will probably be of opinion that they had misunderstood each other.' This is a good instance of Macaulay's inaccuracy. In the case with which he was dealing there was no question of mere verbal communication; the agreement had been put into writing and had been produced by Warren Hastings at the Council. The solemn promise of Barwell had been publicly given and was on record in the Minute book of that body. It must be a strange impartiality which could look at the evidence as it stands and say that there was nothing involved but a misunderstanding. The damning facts are that Francis made a promise and broke

it; that he entered into a public engagement, not without advantage to himself, and when it was convenient to do so, he violated faith. He had for years shown faction and malignity; he now proved himself capable of perfidy and dishonour.

It may be well, at this point, to give some consideration to the character and career of this remarkable man. He will come up again when we arrive at the story of Hyder Ali's formidable invasion, but we have reached now the real crisis of his fortunes in India, when he broke faith with the Governor-General and made his stay at Calcutta for any period impossible.

He had come there with great expectations of advancement, fired with the idea that he should supersede Warren Hastings. Soon after his landing, he wrote: 'I am now, I think, on the high road to be Governor of Bengal, which I believe is the first situation in the world attainable by a subject.' To this aim all his efforts were directed, and it is no breach of that charity which is due to the dead at least as much as to the living, to impute his constant and envenomed attacks in Council on the Governor-General to this motive. Repeatedly defeated, and, still more often worsted in argument though he carried with him the votes, he returned, again and again, perseveringly to the attack. But, as Mr. Forrest says, he had miscalculated the mental vigour and pertinacity of his opponent, and he left India a disappointed and baffled man.

Macaulay, in the Essay, gives a clear and, taken as a whole, an unprejudiced account of his character. 'The ablest of the new Councillors,' says he, 'was, beyond all doubt, Philip Francis. His acknowledged compositions prove that he possessed considerable eloquence and information. Several years passed in the public offices had formed him to habits of business. His enemies have never denied that he had a fearless and manly spirit; and his friends, we are afraid, must acknowledge that his estimate of himself was extravagantly high, that his temper was

irritable, that his deportment was often rude and petulant, and that his hatred was of intense bitterness and long duration.'

After giving his reasons, which are cogent, for identifying Francis with the anonymous Junius, the Essayist proceeds: 'He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity, a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. All this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.'

It is well to add the opinion of Mr. Forrest: 'Had Macaulay studied the minutes and letters now printed he would have had no reason to correct or modify his judgment regarding Philip Francis. The minutes, like the letters of Junius, display the same art of assuming a great moral and political superiority and the same art of evading difficulties, insinuating unproved charges, and imputing unworthy motives. The minutes, like the letters of Junius, are distinguished for their clear and vivid style and are charged with envenomed and highly elaborated sarcasm. In them is displayed the art which Francis possessed to supreme perfection of giving the arguments on his side their simplest, clearest and strongest expression, in disengaging them from all extraneous matter, and making them transparently evident to the most cursory reader.'[1]

There is much more in the Minutes which shows the hate and malignity of the man, and which also explains his

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xxiv.

final failure. The baser qualities of human nature, even when cleverly used, are apt to shatter themselves against the higher attributes of calmness, fortitude, and self-respect. On the rock of Warren Hastings' superior character the waves of Philip Francis's animosity beat in vain. 'The struggle between them' (to quote again from Mr. Forrest) 'for five years had been a severe one, and Francis left India defeated only to renew the war in England. With ceaseless vigilance and concentrated industry he worked to secure the recall of his enemy and to gain the coveted office. He enjoyed the triumph of seeing his foe impeached, and he endured the bitter disappointment of seeing him acquitted after a trial of seven years during which his activity to secure a conviction was unremitting to the end. The inveterate hostility which he displayed towards the accused created a profound prejudice against Francis, and so materially helped to deprive him of the great ambition of his life. "I will never be concerned", he said, in bitterness of soul, "in impeaching anybody. The impeachment of Mr. Hastings has cured me of that folly. I was tried and he was acquitted." But there was about his nature a pertinacity which nothing could subdue. Six-and-twenty years did he pursue with unwearied zeal and industry his object. Then, when Pitt died and the Whig party came into office, he believed the prize to be within his grasp. The death of Cornwallis had left the Governor-Generalship of India once more vacant. But the new Ministers, as Lord Brougham said,[1] could no more have obtained the East India Company's consent to the appointment of Francis than they could have transported the Himalaya mountains to Leadenhall Street. The fixed ideas and ungovernable temper of the man must have brought ruin to their dominion. In one of the last speeches he ever delivered in the House of Commons, Francis denounced the second Mahratta war in the same vigorous terms in which he had denounced the first Mahratta war in the Council chamber

[1] *Statesmen of the time of George III.*

at Bengal. He regarded our successes in India in the same light that he regarded our successes in the Peninsula, as a series of mistakes, and Hastings and Wellington he considered to be both bunglers. The appointment of Lord Minto to the Governor-Generalship put an end to the dream of his life. He never recovered the disappointment, and the bitter remembrance of failure accompanied him into retirement. On March 25, 1807, he asked a few questions on the affairs of India, including the mutiny of Vellore, and this was the last act of the long and active political career of Philip Francis.'

Such was the man, and such were his qualities. He was fated, by what would seem some irony of fortune, to cross with evil intent the path of a great ruler, whose only thought was the welfare of the mighty destinies entrusted to his care. No one can understand either the character or the services of Warren Hastings, who does not know and estimate the obstacles, the delays, the provocations, raised against him through five weary years by the craft and perversity of Philip Francis. It was well for Great Britain that while the genius of the Governor-General showed itself equal to any emergency of war or diplomacy, he possessed also a tranquillity of patience, marvellous alike in its kind and degree, that was capable of enduring any disappointments and any crosses. It was that gift of calmness which, perhaps more than any other quality, baffled the designs of Francis and saved British India.[1]

[1] Macaulay says of him: 'We believe that there never was a public man whose temper was so severely tried; not Marlborough, when thwarted by the Dutch deputies; not Wellington, when he had to deal at once with the Portuguese Regency, the Spanish Juntas, and Mr. Perceval. But the temper of Hastings was equal to almost any trial. It was not sweet; but it was calm.'—*Essay*.

CHAPTER V

HYDER ALI

THE contest, whether military or diplomatic, which had for some time been carried on with the Mahratta confederacy had been most disappointing. Rashly begun by the Bombay Government, to the marked displeasure of the Governor-General; made worse by the hostile majority in the Council who refused the advice of their chief; weakened by the retrocession of an army when victorious in the field; complicated further by an unsatisfactory treaty which proved to be only a hollow truce; and wellnigh ruined by the failure of a weak expedition sent from Bombay after the renewed declaration of war; it had been marked with misfortune from the first, and was still, notwithstanding the brilliant efforts of General Goddard, causing great anxiety to the Bengal Government. Francis continually urged peace at any price, but Warren Hastings, tenacious of his purpose, had devised, with the approval of Goddard, a diversion in the northern part of the Mahratta territory, which might enable that vigorous commander to strike a blow at Poona. Such was the state of things when a terrible disaster and a new combination of foes threatened the British rule in Hindustan with destruction.

It will be remembered that in consequence of the declaration of war by France, the French settlements in India were, by order of the Governor-General, occupied by our troops. Pondicherry, much the most important on the Coromandel coast, had been captured after a brave resistance, and the Madras Government had then proceeded to deal with Mahé.

Now that small seaport was under the immediate protection of Hyder Ali, the powerful ruler of Mysore, who

had expressly warned the Madras authorities that he would not submit to its occupation. They had already given him offence on other grounds, and now fatuously provoked his anger still further, by seizing Mahé. Their whole policy had been rash and blundering in the extreme, and they contrived, by a foolish intrigue with the brother of the Nizam, to add that potentate to the lengthening roll of our enemies.

It was on September 25, 1780, that the Governor-General convened his Council to meet as formidable a crisis as ever befell a State. The accumulated dangers were nothing less than appalling. Thirty thousand Mahratta horse were encamped on the western frontier of Bengal. An invasion of Behar by the same enemy seemed to be imminent. Oude was threatened. The Maharajah Scindia stood ready to fall upon Korah and Allahabad. The whole power of Poona confronted General Goddard. But there was worse news behind. Hyder Ali had descended in force on the Carnatic and was sweeping over it with fire and sword. With the fatuity which marked all the measures of the Madras Government, the British forces, not more than enough to resist if kept well together, had been, in defiance of all rules of sound strategy, divided into two separate bodies. These had been assailed in succession by Hyder, and while one part under Colonel Baillie had been surrounded and annihilated, the other under Sir Hector Munro had been driven back in defeat, and been forced to take refuge under the guns of Fort St. George. Sir Edward Hughes, the Admiral in command on the Indian station, sent tidings of having received undoubted intelligence that seven sail of the line, with a force of seven thousand soldiers, had left France to co-operate with the enemies of England in India. In Madras all was helpless confusion and dismay. In Calcutta many hearts, not without reason, were failing them for fear at the extremity. But there was one man whose heart failed not and whose spirit rose high to the emergency. Chatham, in a moment of national peril,

is said to have exclaimed, 'I can save the country, and nobody else can.' At that memorable September Council, Warren Hastings might, without assumption, have used the same words. Certain it is that if any accident had befallen him at that time, if the bullet of Francis had gone straight, British India would have been lost. But Warren Hastings was there at the helm, and by his capacity and resolution saved the empire committed to his charge.

It is astonishing to read the Minutes of that 25th September and following day, and to see how instantly the Governor-General had grasped the necessities of the crisis, and with what energy he met them. He threw over at once, without a regret, his cherished plans for the Mahratta war; he faced, without a thought of fear, the imminent dangers to Bengal and the adjacent provinces; his whole mind was bent on the one object, that of saving the Carnatic and averting a junction of the French forces with Hyder Ali. For this he was ready to empty his treasury, already depleted; for this to send off his best troops, and, what was much more, his invincible commander; like a true strategist, he risked all to strike hard at the vital point; for this he adjured his Council, and his opening words have a force and dignity that were all his own:—

'This is not a time either for long deliberation at home or the formal and tedious process of negotiation abroad. The calamity which has befallen us upon the Coast, and the alarming superiority which Hyder Ali Khan has acquired in the Carnatic, the despondency of the Government of Fort St. George, the consternation and distrust which seem to have spread themselves among all those who are subject to its authority, the utter want of present means and resources, the diminution of their military strength, and its declared insufficiency for the war which it is to sustain, and above all the authentic informations which we have received of a great naval and military armament prepared by the Court of France and destined beyond all doubt to co-operate with Hyder Ali, demand the most instant,

powerful and even hazardous exertions of this Government to avert the event portended by so many concurrent difficulties. To this point every other consideration must now give place. Without further preface I propose the following resolutions:—

'1st. That the sum of fifteen lacs of rupees be immediately sent to Fort St. George in specie, and laden for that purpose in the *Duke of Kingston*, and the other vessels which are now on the point of sailing for Madras.

'2nd. That the treasure deposited in the new fort, including the moiety lately taken from it, be all replaced in the general treasury, to be applied to the preceding purpose and other exigencies of this Government.

'3rd. That a large detachment of European infantry and artillery be immediately sent to Fort St. George by the *Duke of Kingston* and the other vessels which are now on the point of sailing for Madras.

'To this proposition, as a necessary and essential part of it, I must add the following, viz. that the Commander-in-Chief be requested, and I do for my own part make it my most earnest and particular request, that he will proceed himself immediately to the Coast, and take the command of the army on that establishment.

'[The Commander-in-Chief will pardon this formal and official solicitation. I know the ardour of his zeal for the public service, and that this principle will of itself impel him wherever it shall most require his presence; but I think this a case in which it would mark too great an indifference to the public welfare, and too cold a sense of the utility of his services, to leave the offer of them to his unsolicited option. I make no scruple to avow that although I am convinced that the danger impending on our interests in the Carnatic might be easily repelled even with the force which it already possesses for its defence, yet I cannot place any reliance upon it, unless it shall be properly applied and conducted; that I do not think it has been properly applied, nor expect that it will be properly conducted,

unless Sir Eyre Coote will at this crisis stand forth in his own person and vindicate the rights and honour of the British arms. I mean not to compliment. It is military experience, and above all the high estimation in which his name is held by the world, and especially by that part of it where it was primarily acquired, mark him as the only possible instrument to retrieve our past disgraces, or to preserve the British interests and possessions in the Carnatic from utter ruin. Our armies which have been so long formed to the habits of conquest, will not easily recover from the impression of the dreadful reverse which has lately befallen them, nor be brought to act with their former confidence under unsuccessful commanders. The addition of numbers will not relieve their apprehensions, and will not but contribute to oppress the hands which have been already proved too weak to sustain the weight of an inferior charge]'[1].

It is sufficient proof of the urgency which Warren Hastings attached to these three resolutions, that the fourth which he moved commenced as follows:—

'That an immediate offer of peace be made to the Mahratta State in the mode and on the conditions following: That as the Ministers of that State have professed a desire for peace which has been equally the wish of this Government even from the commencement of the war, and as the attainment of it seems to have been hitherto impeded by the difficulty of managing a negotiation between the principals situated at so great a distance from each other, to preclude all further delays we do at the same time offer peace and bind ourselves to the observance of it on their acceptance and ratification of the following conditions.'[2]

These conditions, speaking broadly, were that all acquisitions made by our forces should be restored, saving any which had been ceded by treaty to other States: that Raghoba should receive a fitting maintenance for life, but

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 718–19.
[2] Ibid., pp. 719–20.

be precluded from advancing any pretension to power save by the universal consent of Mahratta rulers: that the Peishwa should conclude an alliance, offensive and defensive, with the Company, against Hyder Ali and the French: but that if this alliance should not be agreed to, peace should nevertheless be concluded, each party retaining what it had acquired, or that a suspension of hostilities should take place for one year, to give time for a final and perpetual adjustment. The treaty to be concluded with the mediation of Rajah Moodajee Boosla.[1]

To say that the proposal of these terms to the Peishwa's government must have been a sore trial to the pride of Warren Hastings is only to give the highest tribute to his wisdom and patriotism.

The further consideration of the resolutions was adjourned till the following day. Then Francis delivered his opinion. It was characteristic. The same political cowardice which made him advise a purely defensive attitude when the news of Burgoyne's surrender had arrived, again took possession of him, and he had no better counsel to offer than that all the troops should be kept in Bengal to defend that province. The Carnatic was to be abandoned to destruction in order that Bengal might be safe. He was also opposed to the grant of the fifteen lacs of rupees, and entered into a long arithmetical calculation to show that it could not be afforded. He may have been right or may have been wrong in his figures; but what can be said of the statesmanship which at this stupendous crisis dealt with public policy in the spirit of a prudent tradesman casting up his ledger? A mighty dependency was to be lost or saved; the fame of England was at stake; and Philip Francis did a sum.[2] This was the man whose one ambition was to supersede Warren Hastings as Governor-General; this was the policy he would have chosen to pursue.

[1] A Chief whom Warren Hastings by assiduous, secret negotiation, converted from an enemy to a friend.

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 721-2.

But the power for evil had departed from his hands. For some little time the Minutes of Council had recorded the entry, 'Lieutenant-General Sir Eyre Coote absent on a visit to the different stations of the Army.' It was during these absences that Francis had seized the opportunity to obstruct the war policy of the Governor-General. Sir Eyre Coote was now present; a veteran of Indian war, he did not hesitate as to the course he should follow; he gave his voice with that of the Governor-General in support of the resolutions. Francis and Wheler stood together in opposition. Warren Hastings gave his casting vote in favour, and that vote preserved India to the British Crown. It may be doubtful whether in the long course of English history any public step of more enduring moment was ever taken. What is not doubtful is that no public service was ever worse requited.

On the 10th of October the Governor-General struck another memorable blow; he superseded the incapable Governor at Madras. Macaulay, who, to do him justice, fully admits the value of Warren Hastings' services at this critical time, speaks of the transaction as if it had been a mere exertion of arbitrary power on the part of the Governor-General.[1] That indeed might have been morally permissible under such grave circumstances; but it was not the course pursued. There can be no doubt that Warren Hastings regarded the conduct of the Madras Governor with indignation and scorn, and was resolved to be well quit of him. But as usual he gave no rein to his passions; he acted with coolness and legality. It had happened fortunately that the Madras authorities had, by their own imprudence and misconduct, brought themselves into peril of the law. By a section of the Regulating Act the Councils at Madras and Bombay were precluded from entering upon wars or making treaties without the sanction

[1] 'It was no time for trifling. Hastings determined to resort to an extreme exercise of power, to suspend the incapable Governor of Fort St. George.'—*Essay*.

of the supreme authority at Calcutta. Now the President at Madras, in flagrant violation of this provision, had entered into secret negotiations with one Bazalet Jung, a brother of the Nizam, for the cession to the Company of a territory (Gantoor) in one of the Circars. This intrigue was the more reprehensible inasmuch as the Governor-General had specially cautioned the Madras Council against any proceeding which might give umbrage to the Nizam, with whom, as he pointed out, we were under treaty obligations. Not only did Mr. Whitehill persist, against express orders, in this objectionable course, but he added to his misdeeds by concealing all information of what was taking place, for no less than nine months, from the superior authority at Calcutta. Moreover, he had disregarded the express injunctions of the Governor-General to withdraw the troops, as well as the rent collectors, which had been sent into the coveted district of Gantoor, and both were there still, in open defiance of the Nizam's rights.

Warren Hastings was the last man to suffer such encroachment on his statutory powers. He had sternly rebuked the Bombay Council for entering into a treaty with Raghoba without his sanction; and he now resolved to avail himself, against the Madras authorities, of their contumacious infraction of the Act. Doubtless the indignation which he felt at their incompetence in public business and their mismanagement of the war moved him strongly; but he acted nevertheless on strict legal grounds, and confined his indictment to the offences committed. After quoting to his Council the exact words of the Section in the Regulating Act which applied to the case, and detailing at length the misdemeanours at Madras, he moved:—

'For an attempt in the Select Committee of Fort St. George to make a treaty with Bazalet Jung in direct violation of a former treaty then subsisting between the Company and the Nizam.

'For presuming to hold the Circar of Gantoor, at all events in defiance of a requisition from the Governor-

General and Council peremptorily made to restore it, and for refusing to withdraw their troops therefrom, and to remove their Agents and Collectors from it,—knowing as they did that we had formally pledged the faith of the Company to the Nizam for both these points, thereby degrading the authority, weakening the energy, and preventing the efficacy of the powers of this Government.

'For the contemptuous indifference shown to this Board, and the want of even common respect in suffering so long a time to elapse before they replied to orders of such importance, or allowed them any consideration, and even when they did, for eluding the effect of those orders.

'And lastly, for the insult offered to the high commission which we bear in permitting any other claims to stand in competition with the deliberate resolves of the Government.

'Under circumstances of such aggravation, so unpardonable in their very nature, and so dangerous in their consequences that nothing short of instant example can preserve the supremacy of the responsible Government and give credit to its acts, I now move that John Whitehill Esq. be suspended from his office of President and Governor of Fort St. George by order of the Governor-General and Council of this Presidency, according to the Regulating Act of Parliament of the 13th of George III, delegating powers to them for that purpose.'[1]

All the members of Council present voted for the motion. As it was considered that a measure of such importance should not be carried finally without the concurrence of every member, the Minutes were sent to Sir Eyre Coote, who was absent on service, and he returned them with the following entry: 'I agree to the suspension of Mr. Whitehill, upon the grounds of the Governor-General's declarations as a measure to preserve and support the authority of the Supreme Government. We must, from the powers vested in us, be held responsible for the consequences of those acts of disobedience which we suffer to pass unnoticed or un-

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 727.

corrected.' This concise and sensible deliverance made the unanimity of the Council complete.

That the measure thus recorded was a strong, though most salutary, exercise of power goes without saying; but it was something quite different from the despotic proceeding suggested by the words of Macaulay. It is one of, at least, a score of passages in his *Essay* which are in direct variance from the actual facts.

Sir Eyre Coote landed at Madras on November 5, with a small but efficient force of infantry and artillery. He at once took steps to remedy the existing misgovernment and to meet impending dangers. He carried out, with tact and coolness, the delicate task of suspending the Governor from office. Mr. Whitehill having intimated resistance to the order of deposition, Coote quietly asked the Members present whether they admitted the authority of the Supreme Council. They could not directly dispute it, and he then moved that the second Member of Council, Mr. Charles Smith, should take the Chair, which was carried. On this, Mr. Whitehill left the room, with a threat of legal proceedings against the Governor-General.[1] Of these proceedings nothing more was heard, and it may be added that when a full report of the facts reached the Directors of the Company they summarily dismissed Whitehill from their service.

The military affairs presented much greater difficulties. The first news which Sir Eyre Coote received on his arrival was that Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, had fallen. Hyder Ali had taken up his residence in that city and openly claimed the sovereignty of the country. In his letter to the Governor-General, dated the 10th November, Coote mentioned, as one of the alarming features of the situation, what skill and resource had been exhibited by Hyder's army during the siege. Our own forces were dispirited, there was a great want both of food and of transport, and Coote pointed out the urgent necessity of supplying him

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 746.

with an Adjutant-General on whom he could rely. The concluding passage of the letter shows the straits he was in: 'I went yesterday to review the army encamped five miles from hence; appearances not in their favour, but what is worse, I found from the officer in command of the sepoys that the capture of Arcot, from whence they must come, has, from the circumstance of their wives and other near relations being there, not only dispirited them, but created in them that kind of aversion to the service which has already produced many desertions. Judge from this, how anxious I must be for a recruit of sepoys from Bengal, even if the detachment, which is to come by land, has set out, as it is impossible for it to reach me for these four months to come, long before which time I conceive everything will be settled one way or the other. . . . When at camp I was surprised to regard their supply of provisions, which I found to come in so scanty as to be scarcely sufficient for one day's expense. The town of Madras now lives on the supply lately come from your quarter, of which there is not enough in store for one month's expenditure. The country around affords us no assistance. They promise us a supply of grain from the north, but none is likely to arrive soon, in short, we have no certain dependence but from Bengal.'[1] Such was the position, bordering on the desperate, in which this great Commander was placed.

But he showed himself equal to the occasion, rose superior to all obstacles, and on the 1st of January took the field. Twenty days after he was able to write to Madras that 'to the utter honour of the officers and men composing this detachment, the Fort of Carangoly was taken, and in a manner which redounds much to the credit of their bravery.' It was indeed a signal achievement. The troops reached the Fort at early morning, and without waiting for any siege operations, and with no artillery but a single twelve-pounder gun dragged by Lascars, they forced the outer gate, and then, by aid of the gun, two inner gates in succession, and carried

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, pp. 747–8.

the Fort with a rush, the bulk of the garrison making their escape over the wall on the opposite side.[1] It was a portent of future victory. Hyder Ali was at that time investing five fortresses commanded by English officers,—Ambur, Vellore, Wandewash, Permacoil, and Chingleput. The first was forced to surrender before help could reach it. But Coote relieved Chingleput and marched on the 24th to Wandewash, where he found that the siege had been raised. He marched on to Permacoil with the same result, the enemy falling back at each place before the terror of his name. But when he had marched only three miles further, he heard that the French fleet of seven sail of the line and three frigates had appeared before Madras. 'As I had every reason to apprehend they must have brought troops, and that they would land them and would, with the forces of Hyder, have laid siege to Madras, the security of which being the grand national object, I resolved to move towards its protection.' On further intelligence that the French fleet had sailed to Pondicherry, the aged but unwearied Commander resolved at all risks to move there, and within a few days his army was encamped on the Red Hills of Pondicherry with its front towards Arcot. He occupied the town with a detachment, destroyed the boats which supplied the French fleet with provisions and water, and spiked the guns of the place. But not a grain of rice or any other provision could be procured. 'In the hope that by my personal presence something effectual might be done towards obtaining supplies, I set out for Pondicherry on the 7th on horseback, and had just entered the bound hedge when I received a note express from camp informing me that Hyder with his whole army was in sight; instantly I sent orders to the detachment in Pondicherry to join the main body with all expedition, and returned myself to camp.' Perceiving that Hyder was moving in great force to the southward, with the intention of attacking Cuddalore, Coote struck his camp and marched to the relief of that

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 757–8.

Fort. The army of Hyder rapidly followed and, overtaking our force, opened a heavy fire upon its ranks. But Coote had only one aim in view, to reach Cuddalore before the enemy, and disregarding their fire, which does not seem to have been particularly effective, he pushed on and secured his object. Cuddalore was saved; but the situation was most critical. 'There was only rice enough for one day's subsistence for the fighting men of the army. The alarming prospect which this presented me with, produced feelings which are much easier to be imagined than described. I saw in the fall of this handful of men the destruction of the English interest in India. . . . What to determine in a situation so critical, so difficult, and in its consequences so important, I confess was a question of which I dreaded the decision.' But the decision which he took was worthy of Sir Eyre Coote and worthy of the English name.[1] He drew out his small army on a wide plain, and offered battle. Hyder, notwithstanding his great superiority in numbers, declined the challenge, and all attempts to bring on a decisive action having proved fruitless, Coote, who had effected his main object, returned to his encampment. On the very day of his arrival the French fleet weighed anchor and left the bay, and shortly after the rice vessels came in from Madras, when all fear of famine was at an end. But it may be well to quote what Sir Eyre Coote wrote at the time, for it puts in a vivid light the enormous difficulties he had had to encounter and the terrible risks he had run.

'By this time the inhabitants of the town were next to starving, some absolutely had died from want, and two days more would have completed the melancholy scene, as the troops also must have been without a grain to eat. I had by the aid of Mr. Daniel made a small provision to have enabled me to act in this last extremity, and that was about three days' rice I had with inconceivable labour got together. And with which at a hazard dictated by

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 764.

a regard for the public, an unwillingness to subject the credit of the British arms to a disgrace which from their situation appeared to be inevitable, and a desire, if possible, to extricate our affairs from the distress in which they are involved, I determined to force my way at all risks into the Tanjore country, as the only place with three days' provisions I had the least chance of attaining and subsisting the army in. The same motives which dictated this daring undertaking—now our distress for provisions is greatly removed—induce me to continue in my station here, until I can reinforce the army by drafts from the southward. . . . My army, originally small, stands greatly in need of an augmentation, having been considerably weakened by the respectable garrison left in Carangoly, and by deaths, desertions, and the other casualties incident to the military services.'[1] Such was the end of a short but memorable campaign, in which Sir Eyre Coote showed, to the confusion of future detractors, that age and ill-health had not impaired his mental faculties nor quenched the fire of his dauntless courage.

After some months of inaction necessitated by the want of transport and provisions, which was largely owing to the neglect of the Madras Government,[2] Coote on the 18th of June again took the field. He failed in an attack on the fortified temple of Chillumbrum, and marched on to Porto

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 764–5.

[2] Extract from a letter from Lieutenant-General Sir Eyre Coote, March 16, 1781: 'I am now most cruelly situated, the enemy marching before me, and for want of carriage for provisions unable to follow them. I stated this to you fully in my letter of the 14th, by which you will learn that I can hardly carry one day's provisions for the army. The uninformed world will be apt to condemn the tardiness of my motions, and which, I am sorry to observe, knowing what I could do were I provided as I ought to have been, I feel as a severe blow to my honour and military character. However, I comfort myself in the reflection, that when the real state of things comes to be more generally known, I shall no longer be exposed to the unmerited blame, either from the public, or from individuals.'

Novo, situated on the river Vellaar close to the sea. On the 24th Admiral Sir Edward Hughes, a commander as vigorous and daring by sea as Coote was by land, arrived from Madras. The two conferred, and at first resolved to unite their forces for the reduction of Chillumbrum. For this purpose the battering train was ordered to be landed. But no sooner had Eyre Coote returned to camp than tidings reached him of the presence of Hyder's whole army within a few miles. 'The grounds they occupied, naturally strong and commanding,' wrote Coote, 'were rendered much more formidable by most of the spots that would admit of it to advantage being strengthened with front and flanking batteries. Large bodies of cavalry, who had from our arrival at Porto Novo hovered round our camp, rendered it impracticable for even a single hircarrah to return with any intelligence to be depended on of either the strength or position of the enemy's batteries. Our grand guard and other outposts were absolutely the boundary and united extent of our knowledge respecting the enemy.'[1] Coote had now to choose between marching to seek a fight and remaining to depend for supplies upon the sea. He called a council of war. It was determined thereat to embark the battering train, to give the soldiers four days' provision of rice to be carried on their backs, and then to strike for victory. The Admiral undertook to remain off the coast to aid in case of disaster. Bad weather detained the army for a couple of days, but on the first of July they marched at dawn, gaining the open plain, where they were formed in two lines and advanced in battle array. But it was found that Hyder's batteries directly commanded the line of advance, and Coote, as prudent as he was daring, halted to reconnoitre. He discovered that in the sand-hills on his right there was a narrow passage, made in fact by Hyder for the convenience of carriage, and this was instantly occupied. The first line was passed through the small entry in single file, and was reformed in line

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 790-1.

beyond. By order of the General the second line was moved up to secure the passage and thus protect his rear. Coote with the first line, though exposed to a heavy cannonade, waited with coolness till assured that the second line was in position, and then advanced as rapidly as good order would permit. Their movement, skilfully directed by Coote, had turned the left flank of the enemy, and after a two hours' stubborn fight Hyder's position was carried, and his whole army, which had swarmed over the plain, was in disorderly retreat. Want of cavalry prevented any effective pursuit (Coote said that with an adequate cavalry he should have driven Hyder back through the Ghauts) but nevertheless the victory was decisive. The siege of Wandewash was raised by Tippoo, while Hyder fell back to Arcot, and abandoned his designs on the southern provinces of the Presidency. More fighting was to come, but the ultimate end of the war began with this triumph. Macaulay, in his somewhat depreciatory remarks on Sir Eyre Coote, says that he was not now the Coote of Wandewash. No, he was not; time and hard service forbade the possibility; but he was the Coote of Porto Novo, a battle fought by a small band against an overwhelming force, fought with consummate skill as well as unsurpassable courage, and won by the hazardous but brilliant manœuvre of changing front in presence of the enemy. Let us hear Sir Eyre Coote himself, as he speaks in his dispatch[1]:—'Considering the trying situation this army is in, destitute of most of the common resources for carrying on service; weak draft and hardly any carriage cattle (our guns in the face of the enemy's heaviest fire were through deep sand obliged to be drawn a full mile by the soldiers); no provisions but from day to day; pay considerably in arrears; the principal part of the Carnatic and its capital in the possession of the enemy; our armies in different parts of India having unfortunately received checks; an enemy in great force to deal with, whose rapid success has

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 790 et seq.

strengthened his cause with the natives in an alarming degree; no proper force of cavalry on our side, and not half carriage sufficient for our wounded and sick. These things considered, I think I may venture to say that fairly to beat Hyder on his chosen fortified ground was as much as could be expected."

Shortly after this the brigade sent from Bengal under Colonel Pearce, and skilfully led by him on the long march by the coast,[1] reached Pulicat, an inlet of the sea distant some thirty miles from Madras. Hyder sent his son Tippoo to intercept a junction between the two forces; but Coote, crippled as he was by the want alike of transport and of food, was again successful, marching a hundred and fifty miles and joining the reinforcement. This added to his numbers without, unfortunately, increasing the proportion of his equipment. Hyder marched down his whole army to oppose the return of our forces, but Coote again placed a few days' rice on the backs of his men, and once more moved up to attack Hyder on his own ground. On the 26th of August a fierce encounter took place and both sides claimed the victory. But the substantial advantage rested with Coote, and in the following month the still unwearied commander forced Hyder to another engagement and totally defeated him. This closed the campaign, for the bursting of the monsoon and the want of provisions compelled our army to enter into cantonments near Madras. But the plans of Hyder had been baffled and his wellnigh innumerable host defeated by a small band of veteran soldiers, fired by the spirit and led by the genius of Sir Eyre Coote.

But the efforts of that great commander for his country's interests were at no distant date about to terminate. Having heard that the garrison of Vellore was much distressed, he revolved to march to its relief. On January 2nd, he placed himself once more at the head of his army, but

[1] This march had been rendered practicable by the advance, on his own responsibility, of £30,000 by Warren Hastings.

on the [illegible]th he was stricken with apoplexy and was found unconscious in his tent. Before starting he had written to say that his health had been so impaired by fatigue and anxiety during thirteen months of the severest campaign he had ever encountered that he had little hopes of recovery except in retirement. Nevertheless, his patriotic sense of duty had impelled him to relieve Vellore at all hazards. The news of his illness was received everywhere with profound dismay; but not less was the astonishment when it was found that having somewhat recovered he had pushed on at once in a palanquin. On the 9th he fell in with Hyder, posted on the further side of the river Poonyr. Coote at once crossed the stream with his forces, when the enemy struck their camp and retreated. Next day they attempted an attack on our convoy as it was passing a swamp. Coote wrote:—'The attacking our baggage and convoy for Vellore was apparently their grand object, and the guarding this, not to be repaired, often required the utmost circumspection. They made their attack supported by a number of heavy guns cannonading at a great distance; just at this time, the first line had crossed a deep morass which impeded both our train, rice carts, and bullocks very much. The different brigades were immediately ordered to be posted so as to keep the enemy in check on all sides while our convoy passed the bad ground. The whole got over safe and was secured at the head of our lines.' All this done and described by the man who, four days previously, had been stricken senseless with apoplexy and his life despaired of! Next morning our army encamped beneath the walls of Vellore. 'The provisions and stores to be deposited in the garrison will be lodged there this afternoon, and as the object of our march is now happily completed, I shall set off on my return to-morrow morning. The spirit of the troops in this service does them the greatest honour. This is the day the commanding officer of Vellore acquainted both Government and me that it was absolutely necessary to be relieved, that he could not hold out an hour

longer.' When on his return march Coote reached the morass he found Hyder again there to dispute the passage.[1] 'His 24 and 18 pounders, commanding a much more considerable distance than our light 6's and 12's, give him an opportunity of attempting these distant cannonades with an idea of some success, and Hyder always takes care to be certain that there is impeding or impassable ground between his army and our's. . . . The instant the rear and baggage had crossed the morass, I posted my baggage and stores close to an adjoining hill, and pushed on the army over high ground by the nearest possible route for the enemy's main body and guns. I moved off from the left lines, in column first, and as the ground opened sufficiently for forming, marched on in line of battle. As soon as our army was near enough to do execution, we opened an advancing fire of artillery from all parts, and had the mortification to see the enemy precipitately draw off. I term it a mortification, for if Hyder would have stood and risked the chance of war for one hour, his army would, in all probability, have been destroyed, such is the ardour and power of the handful of veterans I have the honour of commanding, but truly distressing our situation for the want of proper magazines, means of field subsistence and carriage for it.' On reaching Fort St. George, Coote made a bitter complaint of the negligence of the Madras Government. 'I can have,' he wrote, 'no dependence on the army being found in such a manner as to enable me to conduct it to such operations as would produce the most permanent advantages and do that justice which my zeal for the interests of the Company and honour of the British arms prompts me to. I must resign the task and leave it to the execution of some one whose health and abilities may be better calculated to surmount those difficulties which I can no longer, in a due regard to the cause of the public and my honour and reputation as a soldier, pretend to contend against.'[2] That is, to put it distinctly, the man

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 841. [2] Ibid., p. 842.

who was daily risking his life from exhaustion, through his wonderful exertions in their service, could not obtain the ordinary supplies of war from this execrable Government of the Madras Presidency.

The truth is that Sir Eyre Coote's plans would have altogether failed and the Carnatic would have been lost, but for the energy and persistence with which supplies had been poured in from Bengal under the direction of Warren Hastings. It was his ability which sustained the war. But even he would have been baffled if the command of the sea had been lost. Captain Mahan, in his remarkable work, has shown how often, throughout the history of mankind, the fortune of war has been decided by the effect of sea-power. As early as the contest between Rome and Carthage, the result of the second Punic war (despite the genius of Hannibal) was decided by the preponderance of Roman naval power in the Mediterranean. Nor is it less interesting, at least for Englishmen, to note the decisive influence on the fate of the Carnatic exerted by the conduct of our seamen in Eastern waters. The French Government was fully alive to the situation and sent their very capable Admiral, Suffrein, with twelve sail of the line and a proportionate number of frigates, to guard their transports crowded with soldiers, to harry British commerce, and to destroy, as it was hoped, the squadron commanded by Sir Edward Hughes. Had this project succeeded the fate of the Carnatic would have been sealed.

But England's star prevailed. On March 15, 1782, Admiral Suffrein arrived with his formidable force off the roads of Madras. He had expected to find there six sail of the line, but on the evening before our squadron had happily received a reinforcement from England of three sail of the line. The behaviour of the two Admirals under these circumstances was instructive. The French Admiral, finding that he would have to fight nine sail of the line instead of six, though his own pennant flew over a force of twelve, hauled his wind and sailed away to the south-

ward.[1] The English Admiral, disregarding his inferiority in numbers, immediately made the signal to weigh anchor, and pursued the French fleet through the night. On the following day he came up with them, struck in between the fighting ships and the transports, captured the *Lauriston* and rescued six valuable prizes from their captors under the eyes of the hostile fleet. Want of wind on the following morning prevented Sir Edward Hughes from coming to close quarters with his foe, but in the afternoon some fresh gusts brought him the opportunity and he forced Suffrein to action. After some hours' conflict during which the flagship and some others of our squadron (being engaged five against eight) suffered severely from the superior fire of the enemy, the French Admiral apparently despairing of success hauled his wind and drew off. The *Superb* and *Exeter* were in almost sinking condition, but the whole squadron was brought safe into Trincomalee.[2] Sir Edward Hughes who, if he had lived later would have been a colleague after Nelson's own heart, patched up his ships in mast and hull, making them tolerably fit for service, and set sail again to seek Suffrein and to guard the coasts of Coromandel.

The news of this gallant action was received with much relief and satisfaction in Calcutta. The Governor-General, after reading the dispatch, ordered a general salute to be fired from Fort William in token of victory, and wrote a warm letter of congratulation to Sir Edward Hughes. 'We know not whether most to admire or applaud that gallant spirit and zeal for the service of your country which prompted you to pursue an enemy so superior in numbers

[1] Sir Eyre Coote, in his dispatch of March 1, 1781, thus wrote: 'I need not take up your time with commenting on the conduct of the French Admiral, or describing the injuries we must have suffered, and the risk we must have run, if he had acted with common spirit. I may with safety advance, that we are entirely indebted to his irresolute behaviour for the little security we now enjoy on this coast.'

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 851–2.

and resolutely to force him into action under the additional disadvantages created by the circumstances which you have described. . . . In a word we regard your action with the French fleet as the crisis of our fate in the Carnatic, and in the result of it we see that province relieved and preserved, and the permanency of the British power in India firmly established. For such important services to the nation and to the Company we, as their representatives, offer you our warmest acknowledgments, and our sincerest congratulations on your success and the glory you have acquired in obtaining it.'[1] It will be observed that Warren Hastings, with his unfailing prescience, saw at once that the superiority obtained at sea had settled the event of the war.

Sir Edward Hughes had been able to refit his battered ships in Trincomalee, because that port and also Negapatam had been captured by a naval and military force sent out by Lord Macartney, recently made Governor of Madras. This expedition was disapproved by Sir Eyre Coote, whose advice in the matter was disregarded, and although it was successful at first his opinion as to its imprudence was only too soon justified. When Colonel Braithwaite, who was in command of the force employed by land, led it back to Tanjore, he suffered himself to be surprised by Tippoo and surrounded by overwhelming numbers. After a most gallant resistance, continued for more than twenty-four hours, our commander had to surrender at discretion. This was followed by the capture of Cuddalore, and the landing of two thousand French soldiers. Sir Eyre Coote once more took the field. He wrote to the Government at Madras: 'I have a weight upon my shoulders that almost bears me down. Worn out in constitution, I feel myself unequal to the constant fatigues and anxieties attending my situation. I shall, however, endeavour as far as lays in my power to stem the torrent that seems almost ready to overwhelm us, not doubting of your exertions to assist my

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 853-4.

labours.'[1] He marched to Wandewash where twenty years before he had defeated Lally. On the refusal of Hyder to fight Coote pushed on towards Pondicherry and foun the enemy, with their French allies, strongly posted. A move was then made in the direction of Arni, where Hyder's principal magazine was situated. This drew him from his strong position, and in the morning of the 2nd of June the two armies were in close proximity. Coote, after providing for his baggage, moved in two lines against the rising ground on which the enemy appeared in greatest force. His rear was threatened by the numbers of the foe, but as at Porto Novo, so here, he changed front in presence of the enemy with celerity and success. When our army again advanced, Hyder's forces retreated in confusion. Coote came up with them about sunset, when they were engaged in crossing a river, and captured a gun and ammunition. Want of cavalry and want of provisions prevented him from taking the greatest advantage of his victory. He wrote: 'It has been my misfortune ever since I took the field, on the event of every success, to have cause to lament my inability to pursue the advantages open from victory for want of a sufficiency of provisions. On the present occasion, had I possessed the means of subsistence, I could not only have driven Hyder up the Ghauts, but most probably have got hold of his grand magazine of Arni, which would most assuredly have so far ended the war as to have checked his immediately returning in force to the Carnatic, whilst it would have given to this army that very support which at this moment maintains his.'[2] This was the last of Sir Eyre Coote's victories.

On the same day that the intelligence of it arrived came the news of another sea-fight. At the end of March the French Admiral left Porto Novo to attack a fleet of our Indiamen which had appeared off the coast. Sir Edward Hughes at once went in pursuit, and fell in with the *Sultan*

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 863. [2] Ibid., pp. 871, 872, 873.

and *Magnanime* and their convoy of seven of the Company's ships. He acted with his usual decision. 'The convoy I immediately despatched to Madras roads, and took with me the *Sultan* and *Magnanime*, steering a direct course for Trincomalee, in order to land the military stores and reinforcements of troops for this garrison, determined not to seek the enemy's squadron till that service was first performed, nor to shun them if they fell in my way.' Hughes succeeded in reaching the island of Ceylon about fifteen miles south of Trincomalee, and bore away for that place, followed by the French fleet of eighteen sail. 'On the twelfth (of April) at daybreak, having altered the position of the enemy's squadron and given them the wind by bearing away, I saw them crowding all the sail they could after us, and their copper-bottomed ships coming fast up with our rear, on which I immediately determined to engage them. At 9 in the forenoon I made the signal for the line of battle ahead on the starboard tack at two cables' length distance, the enemy's squadron then bearing north by east, distant about six miles, and the wind at north by east, they continued manœuvring their ships and changing their position in their line till 15 minutes past noon, when they bore down to engage His Majesty's squadron; one sail of them stretching along to engage our ships in the van, and the other seven sails steering direct by on our centre, the *Superb*, with the *Monmouth* her second ahead, and the *Monarca* her second astern; at half past one the engagement began in the van of both squadrons, and at three minutes after, I made the signal for a general engagement; the French Admiral and his second astern bore down on the *Superb* within pistol shot, where he continued giving and receiving a severe fire for nine minutes, and then stood on, greatly damaged, to attack the *Monmouth*, at that time engaged with another of the enemy's ships, and made room for the ships in his rear to draw up to the attack of our centre, where the engagement was warmest. At 3, the *Monmouth* lost her main and mizzen masts, and drew

out of the line to the leeward of our squadron. At 40 minutes past 3, being near the shore, I made the signal for the squadron to wear and haul their wind in a line of battle ahead on the larboard tack still engaging the enemy. At 40 minutes past 5, being in shoal water and fearing the *Monmouth* might drift too near shore, I made the signal for the squadron to prepare to anchor and hauled down the signal for the line of battle. At 40 minutes past 6 the enemy's squadron in great disorder drew off to the eastward, and the engagement ceased, at which time I anchored with His Majesty's squadron in order to repair our damages, which on board the *Superb* and *Monmouth* were very great indeed, both in their hulls, masts, sails and rigging, nor had any one ship of the squadron escaped without great injury in her hull and masts, and all were much torn in their sails and rigging.'[1]

For seven days the two fleets lay within shot of each other too disabled to fight or to sail. Then the English squadron returned to Trincomalee and the French to a Dutch port. After having 'refitted the several ships of the squadron, and taken on board such of our recovered men as could be serviceable, the English fleet returned at the end of June, to Negapatam to watch the enemy's squadron.'[2] On the 5th of July the two fleets again came in sight, and another desperate conflict took place. It ended in serious loss on both sides, without the capture of any ships. The French were, however, compelled to abandon all idea of capturing Negapatam.[3]

These naval operations, and their effect on the war were, as already observed, a striking example of the results of sea-power; but they were something more; they were a proof that sea-power is not necessarily associated with numerical superiority. Throughout the naval struggle for victory in the Indian Ocean the odds, as far as numbers

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 864. [2] Ibid., p. 876.
[3] Ibid., Introd., p. lxxxiv.

were concerned, were never less than four to three in favour of France. In the fight when Hughes first fell in with Suffrein, those odds were as heavy as eight to five among the ships engaged. Yet, at the end of that fierce encounter, when the English flagship had been riddled with shot, and two of her consorts were in a sinking condition, it was not the English admiral, but the French, who hauled his wind and declined further combat. It was not the greater number, it was 'the man behind the gun', who carried the day. To the honour of our Navy it should be remembered that Warren Hastings declared the event of the war had been decided by Sir Edward Hughes and his seamen; it was their 'sea-power' which preserved the Carnatic; but that power lay not in the number of their ships or the weight of their guns; it lay in the unconquerable resolution of the crews who sailed the one and served the other.

Peace with the Mahrattas had now been secured. Warren Hastings had, originally, been driven into the war, and through the whole contest had earnestly desired some pacific settlement, though he firmly refused to make peace at any price, and always maintained that it would be best brought about by a vigorous prosecution of hostilities. The Governor-General had been for some time indefatigable in his efforts to conciliate Scindia, the most powerful and the most statesmanlike of the Mahratta Chiefs. At length after long and intricate negotiations and a succession of disappointments, the treaty of Salbai was, on May 17, 1782, concluded with Scindia. All the territories conquered from the Peishwa, subsequent to the treaty of Purundbar, were to be restored, the Nizam and Hyder Ali were also to restore the territories they had taken from the English, and all Europeans, except the English and the Portuguese, were to be excluded from the Mahratta dominion. A small increase of territory was given to Scindia in acknowledgement of his humanity to some of our countrymen, and he became guarantee for the due fulfilment of the treaty

between the contracting parties.[1] Sir Eyre Coote wrote to Hyder Ali, informing him of what had taken place, but the old warrior only replied: 'I have received your obliging letter, wherein you observe that the news of the treaty of alliance and friendship which has taken place between the Peishwa and the English must have been known to me, because my name is included therein, all of which I perfectly comprehend. Without giving me notice how is it possible that my name can be included?' He, however, asked for an envoy to be sent to him with a copy of the treaty. This was done, and it is impossible not to admire the traits of character shown by Hyder in his conference with the vakeel. He passed high and generous praise on Sir Eyre Coote as a great commander and an excellent man. He declared that he had never desired war with the English, but had been driven into it by their bad faith; dwelling on the seizure of Mahé and on the failure of the Madras authorities to fulfil their treaty stipulations with him. He had not the worst of the argument, and the interviews came to nothing. But Hyder was now approaching eighty years of age, with a fatal disease upon him, and he died soon after, leaving an injunction to his son, Tippoo, to make peace on any terms with the English.[2]

Previous to this Sir Eyre Coote, worn out with fatigue and sickness, had returned to Bengal. The general officer on whom the charge of the operations then devolved was not equal to the situation. Tippoo, disregarding his father's wise advice, continued the contest, though with less ability, and the war dragged on without any decisive result. Under these circumstances Warren Hastings made a second appeal to the veteran commander, who possessed the confidence of the army and could strike terror into his opponents. Eyre Coote, though not yet recovered from his illness, once more, with signal patriotism, consented to place himself at the head of the army in the Carnatic. He sailed from Calcutta

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxxxv. [2] Ibid., p. lxxxvii.

for that purpose, but it chanced that the vessel conveying him was chased on the voyage by French cruisers, and the anxiety that he felt during many hours, aggravated by the fact that he had his family with him on board, produced a fatal effect. On reaching Madras, before landing, he was smitten with paralysis, and died two days after being carried ashore, a victim to his sense of public duty. England lost in him a great military commander and a devoted servant to the State. He was adored by his soldiers, Native as well as European, and under his leadership they could and did achieve marvels. It is painful to read the expressions which Macaulay, in his Essay on Warren Hastings, thinks fit to use of so distinguished a soldier. Not content with saying of him that he was no longer the Coote of Wandewash (the scene of his famous victory over the French general, Lally) and thus belittling his success at Porto Novo and Arni, he speaks of him in these words: 'Coote had no longer the bodily activity which he had shown in earlier days; nor was the vigour of his mind wholly unimpaired. He was capricious and fretful, and required much coaxing to keep him in good-humour. It must, we fear, be added that the love of money had grown upon him and that he thought more about his allowances, and less about his duties, than might have been expected from so eminent a member of so noble a profession.' And a little further on he contrived to aim a common stroke against both Commander-in-Chief and Governor-General, by saying that Coote 'on most questions concurred with Hastings, who did his best by assiduous courtship, and by readily granting the most exorbitant allowances, to gratify the strongest passions of the old soldier.' This, remember, of the two men who, the one by his statesmanship and moral courage, the other by his high qualities in the field, saved the Carnatic, and with it British India! Verily it might be supposed that the profession of an essayist is to defame his fellow-men. The imperfect account in the preceding pages of the struggle with Hyder Ali has been given in the greater

detail in order that some idea may be conveyed to the reader of the unsurpassable courage, self-sacrifice, and devotion, whether in Council, in administration, or in operations by land and sea, which were exhibited by Hastings, by Coote, and by Hughes. Compare their deeds, as narrated, with the imputations of baseness made by Macaulay! Was Warren Hastings bent only on wheedling and bribing when, in impassioned terms, he adjured the veteran Commander-in-Chief to leave his comparatively easy post at Calcutta, and to stand forth in his own person as the vindicator of the rights and honour of the British arms? Was Coote swayed only by love of money, was he thinking only of allowances, when in response to the Governor-General's appeal, he sailed at once for Madras to face a campaign of exceptional fatigue, waged against almost desperate odds? Was he so failing in bodily activity when he marched a hundred and fifty miles under an Indian sun to effect a junction with Pearce's column, and thus baffle the movements of Tippoo? Or was he wanting in endurance when, not many hours after he had fallen unconscious in his tent, he pushed on in a palanquin to relieve Vellore? Was the mind impaired which planned and executed the brilliant tactics of Porto Novo and Arni, which snatched victory from the extreme of peril and drove a host of men before a handful? Does he stand before us at any moment throughout that terrible conflict as other than the intrepid and sagacious commander, ready to risk life and reputation if only he can serve his country's interests, and maintain his army's fame? But it seems that a soldier may be all this, and may finally give up his last breath on behalf of the State, with the reward of being described by a popular writer as a failure in mind and body, and anxious only for exorbitant allowances. May not the words quoted above be justly held up as a sample of the want of fairness, as well as want of accuracy, with which this essay was penned? But another was at least equally slandered. Eyre Coote's services must ever rank among the greatest rendered

to our country by any military man. Yet in doing justice to his exploits it must not be forgotten that to the Governor-General the conduct of the war, so difficult and so glorious, was due. It was his genius which irradiated and his tenacity which maintained the conflict. But for the Bengal Government, Coote might well have said, we could not go on for a week. And the Bengal Government was Warren Hastings.

CHAPTER VI

CHEIT SING

CHEIT SING, Rajah of Benares, figured conspicuously in Burke's rhetoric on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, and to this day his supposed wrongs loom large, it is believed, in the minds of all readers of Macaulay. To those, comparatively few at the present time, who study Burke's speeches, and to the much smaller number who chance to dip into the Articles of Impeachment, it must appear that in the descriptions of wrong and spoliation laid so vividly before them there is portrayed as an object for their sympathy one of the old hereditary princes of India, whose position was hallowed by antiquity. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of English readers have approached the subject in this belief, and have felt that they had good authority for so believing. Yet there is something that borders on the grotesque in such an illusion. Lest there should be any suggestion of exaggeration or unfairness in these words we venture to borrow from the statement, as clear as it is authoritative, of Sir Alfred Lyall in his *Warren Hastings*.

The grandfather of Cheit Sing, with whom Hastings had to deal, was a small landholder who acquired some wealth and local influence during the troubled period of the Mogul Empire's dissolution, and who obtained the title of Rajah for his son Bulwunt Sing. When the Vizier of Oude took possession of the country, Rajah Bulwunt Sing held under him the lucrative office of farmer and collector of the revenue in Benares and Ghazipur; and when those districts were about to be transferred by the Vizier to the English, the Rajah wrote offering to hold them from the Calcutta Government

on the same terms. Such independence as Bulwunt Sing managed to obtain he derived from the protection of the English, who were interested in strengthening and supporting the possessor of lands which ran along their north-western frontier, and interposed between their districts and very turbulent neighbours. Accordingly Cheit Sing, who succeeded his father, had received from the Vizier of Oude, through the intervention of Hastings himself, a formal grant confirming his tenure as zemindar or landholder of the estate which had thus come into the hands of the family. The Benares Rajah was undoubtedly holding his lands on a mere zemindaree grant from the Vizier of Oude, who levied heavy fines upon him, when the territory was ceded by the Vizier to the Company under a treaty which transferred, as between the two contracting parties, the sovereignty over the Benares district to the Company. The English Government settled the amount of the annual revenue, or share of the rent, to be paid upon the whole estate, and continued the grant to Cheit Sing upon this and other stipulated conditions, with a guarantee that the annual demand should not be increased.[1] So far Sir Alfred Lyall. But it was the annual demand, and not the occasional contribution, to which the guarantee applied; and this difference of permanent and temporary liability on the part of Cheit Sing was the rock on which so many disputants, at the time of the impeachment and thereafter, have constantly split. The ordinary payment of the zemindar was not to be altered, but just as in our own feudal system in mediaeval times, so in the customary relations between all Indian sovereigns and their tributaries, there was inherent in the nature of the tenure an obligation to aid the suzerain on occasions of exceptional danger and difficulty. This was the position always openly avowed by Warren Hastings, and consistently upheld by him; this was the ground on which he defended his action in calling upon Cheit Sing, a vassal of the Company, to furnish additional men and money for the Mahratta war;

[1] Lyall, pp. 118, 119, 120.

and this, it should be added, was the contention supported by Pitt in the House of Commons, when he said that the right (i. e. of levying a fine on the Rajah) had been exercised and acquiesced in, and was indisputably transferred, with the territory, to the Company.

But, it may be said, did not Pitt vote for impeachment on the Benares charge? Yes, he did so, to his great discredit with his own party at the time and to his condemnation, not unmixed with suspicion as to his motive, by an impartial posterity.[1] He excused his vote on the ground that though the right to fine could not be disputed, the amount levied was (as he thought fit to describe it) so unprecedented and oppressive that he could not defend it. A pretence more elusive and inconsistent on the part of the speaker, and more irreconcileable with the facts, was never made by any orator or statesman. Cheit Sing, before the tranfer of the territory, had been fined more than once by the Vizier of Oude, and on one occasion the fine levied and paid exceeded the amount of the sum demanded by the Governor-General. Nor can it be doubted that the whole of the requisitions might have been met by the Rajah, had he so chosen, without oppression or any real impoverishment. The statement of Warren Hastings at the Bar of the Commons, the speech of Thurlow in the Upper House, and the unanswerable array of facts proved at the trial, secured a ready verdict of acquittal from the Lords on this unfounded Article of Impeachment.

But let us, as the Scotch lawyers are accustomed to say, condescend to particulars in this matter. The details are instructive. Macaulay, in his account of the Benares incident, is just as inaccurate as he shows himself in his narrative of the Rohilla war and his story of Nuncoomar's arrest and trial. He starts with the assumption, of course unproved, that Warren Hastings was on the search for some one to despoil, and that he fixed on Cheit Sing as his immediate object. Macaulay states, quite truly, that the Rajah had

[1] In confirmation of this, see the note at the end of the chapter.

already been required to pay five lacs of rupees and had done so; and had been further requisitioned for another similar sum, in regard to which he was extremely tardy. But he then abandons fact for fiction, and asserts that 'Hastings was determined to plunder Cheit Sing, and for that end to fasten a quarrel upon him. Accordingly the Rajah was now required to keep a body of cavalry for the service of the Government.' The statement, as it stands, with its innuendo, is absolutely unfounded. What happened about the cavalry was this. At a consultation held on September 26, 1780, Sir Eyre Coote, as Commander in Chief, presented a plan for the defence of Bengal and Oude which he had sketched at the desire of the Board. As an invasion of Behar was expected, Sir Eyre Coote proposed to station a large body of infantry in that province, together with two regiments of horse and one thousand or as many of Cheit Sing's cavalry as they could procure. The object of the plan suggested was to protect both the English provinces and the adjacent tributary and allied states from Mahratta spoliation, and it was only just that those states should aid in the defence. This was the origin of the demand made on Cheit Sing for cavalry. It was not suggested by Warren Hastings, but by Eyre Coote; yet Macaulay fathers it on the Governor-General, with the addition that he asked for the cavalry in order to pick a quarrel and extort money. On the 2nd November following, the attention of the Board was again called to the want of cavalry, and the Governor-General was requested to write to Cheit Sing for such as he could spare. In December, the Resident of Benares wrote to Warren Hastings that he had repeatedly pressed the Rajah on the subject of the cavalry, but could obtain no answer. The next month he wrote that the Rajah said he had only thirteen hundred in his service, and that all but two hundred and fifty were absolutely necessary for collecting the revenue.

The truth is that Cheit Sing at this critical period, like many other vassals at divers times and places, had begun to

calculate on the chances of a change of masters. He knew the embarrassments of the English Government in the south of India; he knew that the French were at hand with ships and men; he knew that the Nizam was hostile to us and the Mahrattas in arms on our confines. The events of 1857 have read us a lesson for ever on the effect which any threatened lapse of English rule may have on the Native mind. Cheit Sing might have been expected to be faithful. He owed his original advancement to the personal influence of Warren Hastings; he had been protected by the Calcutta Government, and had received much, perhaps too much, consideration. All this was forgotten when the chance presented itself that the English might be driven out, and that provinces might be won in the general scramble. He was intriguing with the Mahrattas, a covert traitor to his allegiance, ready to side with the winning party. For this he had raised troops, and had accumulated treasure. But it was a dangerous game to play with a ruler so resolute and so able as Warren Hastings, who knew everything through his secret service, and understood every shift and turn of the Rajah's subterfuge. Before leaving Calcutta the Governor-General obtained credentials from the Council which, besides granting to him power to make treaties with any of the Chiefs or Powers of Hindustan, also invested him 'with full power and authority to form such arrangements with the Rajah of Benares for the better government of the zemindary, and to perform such acts for the improvement of the interest which the Honorable Company possesses in it, as he shall think fit and consonant to the mutual relation and actual engagement subsisting between the Company and the Rajah'. It is clear enough that the days when the Governor-General was tied down and limited in his policy at every turn were now past.

Warren Hastings had placed Wheler who, now that the evil influence of Francis had been withdrawn, showed himself a loyal and capable colleague, at the head of the administration during his own absence, and invested him

with full powers. He confided to Wheler that he had determined to fine Cheit Sing fifty lacs of rupees, as a just punishment for his contumacy. In this determination Wheler fully concurred. When the Governor-General arrived at Benares he transmitted to the Rajah a statement of his offences. He reminded him that the danger to which the Malwa column[1] had been exposed on its march had been due to his failure in paying the war subsidy of 1780 which he had covenanted to meet: 'Relying on this agreement and promise I gave orders to Mr. Fowke, who was then resident at this place, to receive money and to remit to Colonel Carnac for the pay of the army which had been ordered to march towards the Province of Malwa, and I made no other provision for it, such was my confidence in your faith; but you deceived me, and after having made the first payment of a few rupees, either consulting the temper of the times, or conforming to a premeditated design, you by shifts and pretexts withheld the remainder until the army for whose use it was intended was reduced to the last state of distress. Many hundreds deserted, and had an enemy at that time appeared against them their total destruction had been inevitable. In all this daily applications were made to you by the Resident, and I wrote repeated letters to you, but you paid no regard to either. . . . Besides this, I required, in the name of the Governor-General and Council by letter, and ordered Mr. Fowke to repeat the requisition in person, that you should furnish a body of horse to assist and act with the armies of the Company, and when Mr. Markham succeeded Mr. Fowke I gave him orders to repeat the demand, which he did accordingly with frequent and almost *daily* importunity, limiting the number to 1,500 and afterwards to 1,000. To this demand you returned evasive answers, nor to this hour have you contributed a single horseman.' And the letter closes with an intimation that the Governor-General well knew there

[1] This force had been sent by the Governor-General to effect a diversion, and thus relieve General Goddard.

were other matters behind: 'I pass over the instances of your conduct in which, through the means of your secret agents, you have endeavoured to excite disorder in the Government on which you depend, and your neglect of the duty which you owe to it, and to the subjects of this zemindary by suffering the daily perpetration of robberies and murders, even in the streets of the city of Benares itself, to the great and public scandal of the English name, and in violation of one of the conditions on which you received the confirmation of this zemindary. But as the two foregoing instances amount to a direct charge of disaffection and infidelity to the Government on which you depend, and happened at a time in which it was your duty most especially to have exerted yourself in the support of its interests, I have therefore judged it proper to state them to you thus fully in writing, and to require your answer to them, and this I expect immediately.'[1]

To these charges the Rajah replied that he obeyed the orders 'with the utmost readiness. . . . I sent first one lac of rupees with an answer to your letter. Afterwards, having paid to Mr. Fowke the sum of one lac and seventy thousand rupees, I sent a letter requesting a further allowance of time to make some preparations. To this I received no reply. It being no time to delay, notwithstanding this I was not a moment inattentive to this concern, and as soon as my Buxey arrived I paid immediately the remaining part of the sum. The remitting of this to the army did not depend upon me; if any delay happened on this head I could not help it. If, besides the payment of the money, the remittance of it to the army had rested with me, a delay of this kind should not have happened.'[2] The answer, says Mr. Forrest, was false in all its parts. He did not pay the first lac until August 5, 1780, though the demand was made in the end of June, and then he refused to pay any further sum until he had got an answer to a letter he had written to

[1] For this letter, see *State Papers*, Vol. III, pp. 782–3.

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 785.

Hastings requiring further time to dispose of his effects. To this representation the Rajah said he received no reply, though a reply was immediately sent strongly expressive of the Board's displeasure at his excuses, which they said they knew to be futile. This expression of displeasure did not hasten the payment, which was not finally made until October 18, 1780, although the Rajah promised it in the month of July. As to the cavalry, Cheit Sing affirmed that he collected five hundred horses, but that he received no information as to where they should be sent. 'I remained astonished.' This answer was justly described by Warren Hastings as not only unsatisfactory in substance, but offensive in style. It was an indication of the spirit of revolt which Cheit Sing had for some time cherished. 'Under these alarming appearances of the Rajah's conduct and disposition,' wrote the Governor-General to the Council, 'I conceived myself indispensably obliged to form some immediate and decisive plan for obviating their consequences, and for the preservation of the Company's rights and interests in this zemindary. To have left him in the full exercise of powers which he had notoriously abused, and which it was to be apprehended he would employ to the most dangerous purposes, was totally inconsistent with the maxims of justice and prudence. To divest him entirely of the zemindary, though justifiable on the grounds stated above, would be attended with an appearance of severity, and might have furnished grounds for construction unfavourable to the credit of our Government and to my own reputation.' After weighing the whole case, the Governor-General ordered the Resident to put Cheit Sing under arrest in his palace, and he sent two companies of the sepoys he had brought with him to Benares to mount guard on that building. Unfortunately they were sent without ammunition. A large body of armed men from the fortress of Ramnagar crossed the river suddenly and massacred the whole party. Cheit Sing escaped to his fortress of Luteefgarh, and never again entered Benares. Warren Hastings for a short time was in imminent peril, but several

battalions marched up to his relief, and he was safely conveyed to Chunar,[1] where he carried on the business of Government, and negotiated treaties with the Mahrattas, in unruffled serenity.

But he had been none the less impressed by the scenes he had gone through, and he wrote to his colleagues: 'My regrets for the past are personal. I shall ever retain the painful remembrance of that scene of blood of which I have been too near a spectator, and which no future return of prosperity can ever efface from my mind, but in the prospect before me I think that I have every reason to expect the happiest termination of it in the extension of the power and influence of the Company, and that the past example may contribute to the permanency of both by prompting us to guard against the secret growth of the like evil which has produced it.'[2] On August 27, 1781, he had written, *inter alia*: 'The Rajah's forces are divided between Ramnagar and Luteefgarh. His fixed establishment exceeds 10,000 men, and all his recruits bear arms. Major Popham is encamped on the plain east of the fort. I expect to be joined by a regiment from Cawnpore which are ordered for my guard at Lucknow. Lieutenant Polhill, with six companies of the Nabob's guard, are at hand, and Major Moses Crawford's battalions. My only distress is the want of money, and is great.'[3] The Governor-General was delivered from all difficulties by the victorious advance of his officers. Captain Blair totally defeated a force of some 4,000 of the Rajah's best men, capturing guns and tumbrils; and Major Popham carried the two fortresses of Lutteefpoor and Pateeta by some brilliant operations. The whole zemindary fell into our hands, and Cheit Sing, who might have retained the estate and the rule if he had submitted quietly, found himself a fugitive and exile, with no one to thank but himself for the falsehood and contumacy which had caused his ruin.

[1] A fort situated on a high rock above the Ganges.

[2] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 798. [3] Ibid., p. 784.

On September 25, 1781, Warren Hastings returned to Benares, where he found the city restored to a state of order and tranquillity.[1] He issued proclamations offering pardon to all except Cheit Sing and his brother, 'whom their late rebellious conduct and their rancour manifested to our nation in the deliberate murder of many of our soldiers, and even unarmed passengers who had the misfortune to fall into their hands, precluded from every title of mercy.'[2] A grandson of Rajah Bulwunt Sing by a daughter was proclaimed Rajah with great form and solemnity. The Governor-General also took steps for the protection of the persons and property of the inhabitants of the sacred city. When the sovereignty of Benares was ceded to the Company the superintendence of the police was formally made over by the English to Cheit Sing, but the arrangement had proved a disastrous failure. 'From this period,' wrote Warren Hastings, 'the appearance of public justice was gradually effaced till at last, without any system of police, any courts of judicature, or any awe of the sovereign power, the inhabitants of Benares were guilty of enormities and crimes which reflected the greatest disgrace on the Government to which they were subjects. The relations and dependants of the Rajah, or the merchants whose credit was useful in the payment of his revenue, might violate the rights of their fellow-citizens with impunity, and the sacred character of a Brahmin or the high rank of the offender were considerations which stamped a pardon on the most flagitious crimes.'[3]

To remedy this scandalous state of things, Warren Hastings established distinct departments for the police and for the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the city, and placed them under the regulation and control of a chief magistrate who was subject to the immediate orders of the Governor-General and Council. The person chosen by him to fill this office was a Mahomedan, Ali Ibrahim Khan, 'a man

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxvi. [2] Ibid., Vol. III, p. 806.
[3] Ibid., p. 515.

who has long been personally known to myself and, I believe, to many individuals of our Government, and whose character for moderation, disinterestedness, and good sense will bear the tests of the strictest enquiry.'[1] Regarding the measures which the Governor-General had taken for the better administration of the city of Benares, his colleagues expressed their warmest approval in the following terms: 'Your guarded attention to the security and convenience of the pilgrims, and your abolition of those taxes and embarrassments which have grown against them from the rapacity of a corrupt Government, are peculiarly to your credit.' They added: 'Even in a political view your arrangements upon the subject are interesting, and may lead to the most important consequences. All Hindustan, from the sources of the Ganges to Cape Comorin, is interested in the happy regulation of the police of Benares, and the unpolluted tranquillity of its colleges. The leading Mahrattas with whom we are at war are strongly attached to this supposed residence of the purity of their religion. From these considerations we beg leave to suggest to you whether it would not be proper to publish in the different languages of India the regulations you have adopted. A very short time will spread them all over Hindustan, which, with the reports of the pilgrims upon their return, cannot but impress the natives with the mild liberality and attention of our Government. Even among the different nations of Europe whose learned enquiries have been of late particularly directed to the religious antiquities and early knowledge of the sciences in this country, it will be matter of satisfaction and admiration and of consequent credit to our Government that Benares, in which you were so dangerously exposed, should remain so deeply indebted to your careful regulation and protection.'[2]

It might be curious, and perhaps instructive, if any who read what was thus said in appreciation of the deeds of Warren Hastings at Benares by the men who were on the

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 816. [2] Ibid., p. 820.

spot, by those who knew the persons involved in the transactions, and the facts as they occurred at the time, would place the above testimony side by side with the furious rhetoric which was poured out by Burke on the Impeachment. The fundamental error of the orator, which vitiated the whole of his argument, was that he treated Cheit Sing as an independent prince, who had been unjustly compelled to pay five lacs of rupees for three years consecutively, to raise and equip troops for a war in which he had no concern, and who had been finally put under arrest and fined fifty lacs of rupees for contumacy, because he did not at once comply with these exactions. Now the simple answer to all Burke's elaboration of statement is that the facts of the case are the other way. So far from being an independent prince, Cheit Sing had been a vassal of the Vizier of Oude, liable to requisition and fine, in addition to his annual rent, and when the Vizier transferred Benares by treaty to the English rule, the Rajah, with all his dues and liabilities, was transferred with it. But more than that: the Bengal Government proceeded, after the transfer, to renew the grant of the zemindary to the Rajah, and the deeds of grant are in existence and tell their own tale. They are in the ordinary form of zemindary grants, and do not in any sentence suggest so much as a hint of any independence on the part of the Rajah. He was simply a zemindar of the Company, and liable to contribute to its necessities in times of urgent need. There never was a time of more urgent need than that when troops and money were requisitioned from Cheit Sing.[1] No doubt the fine was heavy, but the treasure found in his fortresses, and the amount of gold and silver which he was known to have carried off with him, proved that he could have paid the amount demanded and have still been a wealthy man. In enforcing these demands, says Mr. Forrest, Hastings was actuated by no personal or malicious motives, but was compelled by the pressing exigencies of the hour and the desire

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxviii.

to save India to Great Britain. 'I had no other view in it,' he said, 'than that of relieving the necessities of the Company by an act which I considered to be strictly just.'[1]

The 'happiest termination', which he himself had foreseen, undoubtedly came to pass. Law and order were established, and justice was permanently organized, in the city of Benares. The sanctity of the Hindoo religion, in its ancient seat, was secured. It was in return for these benefits that the inhabitants erected a temple in honour of Warren Hastings, as their protector and benefactor. When this fact was mentioned during the proceedings in support of the impeachment, Burke replied that he believed the Hindoos built temples to the deities of smallpox and murder, and that he would not dispute the claim of Mr. Hastings to be admitted to such a pantheon. Macaulay speaks of this utterance as a surprisingly fine example of parliamentary oratory. It is possible that a more impartial taste may differ from such a conclusion.

It was on May 21, 1781, that the Governor-General proposed to the Council that he should visit Oude in order to have an interview with the Nawab, whose province had fallen into a state of great disorder and confusion. He also stated that he hoped to take advantage of his visit to Oude to conclude negotiations with the Rajah of Benares. The statement that he then made to the Council does not suggest that he in any way anticipated the disturbances that arose at Benares, and it was probably believed that all would pass off quietly. Sir Alfred Lyall seems to throw the whole blame of the disaster on Warren Hastings; and if it is meant that it would have been more prudent to take greater precautions, such as securing the presence of a much more powerful force before proceeding to place the Rajah under arrest, few readers (having of course the advantage of forming an opinion after the event) will be found to differ. But if more is meant, if it is proposed to infer that a rebel-

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxix.

lious outbreak, largely supported from outside, was due to the action of the Governor-General, a great mistake is made. It must be obvious to all who look closely into the matter that Cheit Sing had a plot against the English rule ready to his hand, that he was counting on help in his design, and that the bomb would have burst sooner or later, at the more or less favourable opportunity. It burst prematurely on the arrest of the Rajah, but for that it is unfair to blame Warren Hastings, and it is not only unfair but unhistorical. The outside help came from the Begums of Oude and their creatures, and it is to them that attention must now be turned.[1]

[1] Macaulay strongly censures the conduct of Pitt in dealing with the Benares charge. He narrates how Pitt maintained in his speech on Fox's motion that the Governor-General was justified in calling on the Rajah for pecuniary assistance, and in imposing a fine when that assistance was contumaciously withheld. He also thought that the conduct of the Governor-General during the insurrection had been distinguished by ability and presence of mind. He censured, with great bitterness, the conduct of Francis, both in India and in Parliament, as most dishonest and malignant. The necessary inference from Pitt's arguments seemed to be that Hastings ought to be honourably acquitted, and both the friends and opponents of the Minister expected from him a declaration to that effect. To the astonishment of all parties, he concluded by saying that, though he thought it right in Hastings to fine Cheit Sing for contumacy, yet the amount of the fine was too great for the occasion. On this ground, and on this ground alone, did Mr. Pitt, applauding every other part of the conduct of Hastings with regard to Benares, declare that he should vote for Mr. Fox's motion.

The House was thunderstruck; and it well might be so. If Mr. Pitt's view of the case of Cheit Sing were correct, there was no ground for an impeachment, or even for a vote of censure. We can see, we think, in what way a man of sense and honour might have been induced to take any course respecting Hastings, except the course which Mr. Pitt took. With great diffidence, we give it as our opinion that the most correct course would have been to impeach on the Rohilla charge, and to acquit on the Benares charge. Had the Benares charge appeared to us in the same light in which it appeared to Mr. Pitt, we should, without hesitation, have voted for acquittal on that charge. The one course which it is inconceivable that any man of a tenth part of Mr. Pitt's abilities can have honestly

taken was the course which he took. He acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge. He softened down the Benares charge till it became no charge at all; and then he pronounced that it contained matter of impeachment.

The general astonishment was the greater, because, only twenty-four hours before, the members on whom the Minister could depend had received the usual notes from the Treasury, begging them to be in their places and to vote against Mr. Fox's motion. It was asserted by Mr. Hastings that, early on the morning of the very day on which the debate took place, Dundas called on Pitt, woke him, and was closeted with him many hours. The result of this conference was a determination to give up the late Governor-General to the vengeance of the Opposition. It was impossible even for the most powerful Minister to carry all his followers with him in so strange a course. Several persons high in office, the Attorney-General, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Mulgrave, divided against Mr. Pitt. But the devoted adherents who stood by the head of the Government without asking questions, were sufficiently numerous to turn the scale. That good and great man, Mr. Wilberforce, often related the events of this remarkable night. He described the amazement of the House, and the bitter reflections which were muttered against the Prime Minister by some of the habitual supporters of the Government. Mr. Wilberforce, we are bound to add, fully believed that his friend was sincere, and that the suspicions to which this mysterious affair gave rise were altogether unfounded.

Those suspicions, indeed, were such as it is painful to mention. The friends of Hastings, most of whom, it is to be observed, generally supported the administration, affirmed that the motive of Pitt and Dundas was jealousy. Hastings was personally a favourite with the King. He was the idol of the East India Company and of its servants. If he were absolved by the Commons, seated among the Lords, admitted to the Board of Control, closely allied with the strong-minded and imperious Thurlow, was it not almost certain that he would soon draw to himself the entire management of Eastern affairs? Was it not possible that he might become a formidable rival in the Cabinet? If the Commons impeached Hastings all danger was at an end. The proceedings, however they might terminate, would probably last some years. Such were the motives attributed by a great part of the public to the young Minister, whose ruling passion was generally believed to be avarice of power.—See *Essay*.

CHAPTER VII

THE BEGUMS

WHEN the former Vizier of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla, so prominent in the story of the Rohilla War, came to die, he left behind him treasure, as was believed, to the amount of £2,000,000. But he also left heavy debts, including his obligations to the Government at Calcutta, and also a large amount of pay due to his army. The treasure which, according to one account afterwards given, had been accumulated by the late Vizier for use in some possible emergency, had been deposited in the vaults of the zenana at Fyzabad. It is clear that this money really belonged to the State, and even supposing that there were other claims that might be advanced, it is certain that the first use to which it should have been applied was to discharge public obligations. But here the Begums came in. They were residents in and mistresses of the zenana, and were in practical possession of the treasure. These two princesses, one the mother, the other the widow, of the late Vizier, asserted that he had made a will in their favour and that the whole of the large sum in question was their exclusive property. It must be observed that never, at any stage of a dispute that was prolonged for years, and that led to much violent contention, was this will produced. Neither of these ladies, it may be safely asserted, had any legal ground for their claim. By the Mahomedan law the widow would have been entitled to one-eighth of the residue after the debts had been paid, and the grandmother (at any rate during the life of the widow) had no claim to inheritance. But the Begums had on their side the fact of possession, made all the stronger by the immemorial custom of the East, which regards a forcible invasion

of the zenana as an act not to be contemplated. Asaph-ul-Dowla, the new Vizier, a weak, irresolute man under any circumstances, was mortally afraid of his mother; she, on her part, is reported to have said to the English Resident on one occasion, that she would throw the whole treasure into the river rather than allow her son to share it; and on another that if he (the Resident) would only stand on one side quietly, she would soon drive the Nawab (her son) with his ministers and troops into the stream. Nor was the boast altogether empty, for the Begums maintained an armed force of several thousand men, commanded by their two chief eunuchs, and they governed extensive fiefs, independent of their sovereign. This was the amiable and helpless lady whom Sheridan, in his famous speech, described pathetically as an outraged parent, declaring that Warren Hastings had placed a dagger in the hands of her son, and made him point it against the bosom of his own mother!

Asaph-ul-Dowla was the more pressed for money because the settlement made with him at the death of his father, made by the hostile majority of the Council in the teeth of strong protests by the Governor-General, had largely added to his liabilities. Francis and his abettors had increased the hire of the English troops, and at the same time had deprived the Vizier of the means of paying for them. This was one of the inconceivably rash steps which the triumvirate took soon after their arrival from England. In October, 1775, Asaph-ul-Dowla, hard pressed at once both by the Company and by his army, commenced a negotiation with the Begums through Mr. Bristow, then the Resident in place of Mr. Middleton. Mr. Bristow, after informing the Board that neither the zemindars nor the ryots would pay their rents, wrote as follows: 'To add to this unfortunate circumstance, the Nawab has not yet been able to obtain any money from the Begum. Immediately on his return from Fyzabad he stated his distresses to me, and begged of me to use my endeavours to persuade the

Begum to assist him. I wished to have declined complying with his Excellency's request, especially after he had indirectly objected to my having any correspondence with her, but being sensible of his necessities I consented upon the condition of his not expecting of me to use any violent means. I accordingly went to Fyzabad and explained particularly in writing to the Begum how impossible it was for the Nawab to conduct his Government without her assistance, and likewise insinuated to her that she could not complain of him, for he had granted her an additional jagir of four lacs a year for the sums he had already borrowed of her, and treated her with great respect. I further insinuated to her that the treasures she possessed were the treasures of the State, as she had not succeeded to them by any legal right, and they had been hoarded up to provide against an emergency. That that emergency was arrived, and I recommended it to her to spare his Excellency the sum of fifty lacs as a donation. If this did not please her, to let the treasure be divided according to the laws of the Koran, or else grant him a loan, and that I could engage for the repayment of it.'[1]

It may be observed here, parenthetically, that the communication quoted from above was made, not by any trusted adherent of the Governor-General, but by the chosen agent of that majority in the Council who had superseded Mr. Middleton because he had been nominated by Warren Hastings and was known to enjoy his confidence. The whole proceedings were at this time under the direction of the triumvirate who must be held responsible for them, and it was their man, Mr. Bristow, nominated to carry out their policy, who stated that the treasure was a State treasure, laid up for an emergency, and demandable by the State authority. But when, a few years after, Mr. Middleton, then restored to the Residency, under the direction of the Governor-General, demanded that the Begums should hand over, not the whole of the treasure, but so

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 439.

much thereof as would defray the debt due to the Calcutta Government, the charge is made that it is a criminal spoliation, a robbery of two helpless women.

'After much persuasion,' says Mr. Bristow, 'the Begum agreed to pay the Nawab twelve lacs of rupees on condition that the Company secured to her the possession of her jagirs for life, and that the Nawab did not interfere with her on any account. I excused myself because of the insufficiency of the sum, but offered to comply with her terms in case of her granting fifty lacs. This I had authority for from the Nawab, who, on desiring me to undertake the negotiation, repeatedly and earnestly expressed his desire not to use any violence. And in order to prove it, he said he would submit to the Company's being mediator of all differences between him and the Begum; but it was hard, when reduced to such distress, that his mother should uselessly keep up immense treasuries.' It was finally agreed between the Nawab and the Begum that in consideration of his receiving thirty lacs (in addition to the sum he had already received) on account of his patrimony he gave the Begum a full acquittal as to the rest, and secured her jagirs to her without interference for life. Bristow was guarantee to this treaty on the part of the Company. The impolicy of the agreement, says Mr. Forrest, was apparent, but the Governor-General and Council sanctioned it because, as they informed the Directors, the urgency of the case required it.[1]

But the Begum, as might have been expected, was soon dissatisfied. She wrote in the following December complaining that whereas it had been agreed that she should liquidate eleven lacs of the amount by giving goods, elephants and camels, and had trusted to Mr. Bristow, as a party to the agreement, to see that it was carried out in a proper manner, the goods nevertheless had been valued at one fourth of their intrinsic worth, and how was she to make up the difference? She appealed to Warren

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxx; Ibid., Vol. II, p. 439.

Hastings to help her, and he, who has been perpetually painted as the robber and oppressor of these ladies, wrote, in a Minute he prepared upon this letter, as follows: 'All my present wish is that the orders of the Board may be such as may obviate or remove the discredit which the English name may suffer by the exercise or even the appearance of oppression on a person of the Begum's rank, character, and sex. Had the Nawab chosen to make use of the means with which his own power alone supplied him to exact money from the Begum, his mother, this Government would have wanted a pretext to interfere in her behalf. But as the representative of our Government has become an agent in this business, and has pledged the honour and faith of the Company for the punctual observance of the conditions under which it was concluded, we have a right to interfere, and justice demands it, if it shall appear that those engagements have been violated, and an injury offered to the Begum under the cover of the authority by which they were contracted. I am therefore of opinion and recommend that a letter be written by the Board to Mr. Bristow commanding him to remonstrate with the Nawab against the seizure of the goods as his own original property, which he received from his mother in payment of the eleven lacs stipulated to be so made, to insist on the Nawab's receiving them in payment, and that he either admit of the valuation which she put upon them, or that he allow them to be approved by persons appointed for that purpose by both parties.'[1] But the majority of the Council, then responsible for all public acts, either did not take so favourable a view of the Begum's cause, or else were resolved to oppose everything recommended by the Governor-General, and ordered that the letter should be sent to the Resident and an explanation demanded. Monson observed, truly enough: 'She should be informed of the sums of money the late Nawab owed this Government by treaty for services performed,'

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 471.

and which were not liquidated at his death; that she received the advantages of the Rohilla conquest, the plunder of those countries being deposited with her; as she succeeded therefore to all the Nawab's wealth, it is just that she should discharge the demands due for those services by which she is the principal gainer. The Vizier's estate has not been divided according to the usual custom of Mahomedan princes.'[1] Just so. But why, when Warren Hastings subsequently demanded from the treasure in the Begum's hands payment of the money due to the English Government, was it called spoliation and robbery? In January, 1776, Mr. Bristow wrote to the Board that the complaints of the Begum were unfounded. 'According to the Koran and the usages of the country the Nawab could claim an infinitely greater share than he has got.' He added: 'The Begum had great influence in the late Vizier's time. On the Nawab Asolph's-ul-Dowla's accession he at once placed the whole management in the hands of Murtezah Khan, which disgusted both her and her adherents, particularly her eunuchs who had their views in keeping the wealth in the Begum's possession. The principal, Behar Ali Khan, enjoys her entire confidence.'[2] In order that the Board should have a knowledge of 'the Begum's sentiments at the present juncture and of her temper,' he enclosed the last letter he had received from that termagant lady, containing threats against her son and his Minister. This may be taken as ending the first part of the Begum history.

But during the five following years the Governor-General was much disturbed by the worsening condition of the Oude government. He strongly remonstrated with the Nawab on his extravagance, the impolicy of his conduct, and earnestly advised him to dismiss from his presence the worthless favourites with whom he was surrounded. To enforce this advice he plainly told him: 'The English, if you do not follow it must break off their connexion with

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. II, p. 472. [2] Ibid., pp. 485–6.

you altogether.' This was the state of affairs in 1781 when the Governor-General announced to the Council his intention to visit Oude, with the view of restoring to that territory a better administration of government and a better state of finance. The outbreak at Benares caused him to be detained at Chunar, and while he was there the Vizier visited him, and a long negotiation took place between them. It was a difficult moment for both. The Indian Government was in great distress for money. There were several armies in the field, and the demands for supply were various and immediate. The entire expense of all military operations fell on the treasury of Bengal, and the treasury of Bengal was empty. Heavy loans had been contracted, the credit of Government was low, and Warren Hastings, as was indeed his imperative duty, looked to the chief debtor of the Company for relief. The Vizier of Oude owed the Company the very large sum of a crore and a half of rupees, and of course the Governor-General pressed for the money. The Vizier on his side protested that his funds were exhausted. The Governor-General knew that this was true; and knew also that it was so owing partly to the unfair treatment the Vizier had received from the triumvirate in preceding years, and partly to the conduct, narrated above, of his mother. Warren Hastings' feelings towards that lady, whom he had formerly endeavoured to befriend, were necessarily changed when he discovered that she, in concert with the older Begum, was actually engaged in stirring up insurrection against him. The knowledge of the Begum's complicity in the Benares outbreak reached the Governor-General, as will presently be conclusively shown, before he settled the terms of a treaty with the Vizier, and of course that knowledge coloured the negotiations.

Let us see what the terms were. As it was absolutely necessary, if any real improvement was to be made in his finances, that the Vizier should be enabled to liquidate his existing debts, the first article of the treaty provided

that the English force in Oude should be reduced to one brigade, and that the English officers who had been appointed to the Vizier's corps should be withdrawn. The Nawab on his part consented to separate his public from his private expenses; to fix the amount of the latter; to reform his army; to entrust the public treasury to his Minister under the inspection of the British Resident. The second article stipulated: 'That as great distress has arisen to the Nawab's Government from the military power and dominion assumed by the jagirdars,[1] he be permitted to resume such as he may find necessary, with a reserve that all such for the amount of whose jagirs the Company are guarantees shall, in case of the resumption of their lands, be paid the amount of their net collections through the Resident in ready money.' The article stated that the resumption of the jagirs should be general, and Warren Hastings pressed on the Vizier the necessity of resuming those held by his worthless favourites. The Nawab was only anxious to resume those held by his mother; but this Warren Hastings justly and strenuously opposed, and a vast number of jagirs were resumed. In this the Governor-General followed his usual wise and equitable policy.

But concerning the resumption of the Begum's jagirs (which they had used to levy troops and oppose their Sovereign's rule, as well, of late, as to support rebellion in Benares) Warren Hastings was fiercely attacked on the ground that the Bengal Council had guaranteed the Begum's possession. Two answers were given to this contention; and both seem conclusive. Lord Thurlow said in the House of Lords, when speaking on the matter, 'The subjects of the first country in the world are obliged on all public occasions to dispose of their property for an equivalent when the public good requires such a sacrifice; and in this case the experience of many years has proved the necessity of the measure.' But Warren Hastings gave the

[1] Powerful nobles, with great fiefs, and bands of armed retainers.

more direct reply that when he consented to the resumption of the jagirs he was, from intelligence which had reached him, convinced of the Begum's disaffection. 'It was not my opinion only, but it was the general rumour of the country, that she and her ministers aided and supported Cheit Sing in his rebellion.' He referred to the affidavits which had been put in evidence, as proof of this widespread rumour. It has been objected that these affidavits must have been taken after the resumption had been agreed on; but this does not touch the real point. On the 8th September, Colonel Hannay wrote from Fyzabad to the Governor-General: 'This town has more the appearance of belonging to Cheit Sing than the Vizier. The Begums have placed guards to prevent any of my people going to the bazaar in it. Within these few days Sheik Chaan, with near 1,000 horse and foot, has marched from hence to Benares (they were raised here), and I must confess for my own part I have no doubt but Jowar Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan,[1] through their agents, stirred up all the disturbances which extend from hence to Zowey Azimgur.'[2] This letter was written eleven days before the treaty of Chunar was signed.

In another letter written immediately afterwards, Colonel Hannay says: 'I have before told you how violently the Begum's people inflame the present disturbances, and in addition to this the principal Zemindars and Rajahs have all certificates under the seal of Cheit Sing that he will supply them with whatever money they may require for subsisting all the troops they can raise. In a very short time I apprehend the greatest part of the Nawab's dominions will be in the state we are in here, and it is the general belief of every man in this part of the country that the conduct I have related is a concerted plan for the extirpation of the English. . . . Should the present disturbances proceed from a plan of policy, it will be concealed from you as much as

[1] The two chief eunuchs of the Begums.
[2] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 1004.

possible, and therefore I take all possible means of communicating to you what I know to be facts. . . . We have no communications with Bengal, and the troops on this side Benares are at present too much separated to yield one another timely assistance. I hope to God a sufficient force is ordered for the reduction of Cheit Sing, *for the people who are daily sent to him, horse and foot, from Fyzabad is very great.*' On the 13th he wrote: 'It is impossible in the general insurrection, which now reigns almost universally, for me to get the force together the Nawab demanded, or to force my way to you without a loss. The greatest anarchy prevails; the present insurrection is said and believed to be with an intention to expel the English.'[1] And subsequently: 'I have already and repeatedly informed you of the dispositions of those in favour at Fyzabad, which has in fact been one of the great sources of the insurrection, and the place of all others in the Vizier's dominions which has supplied Cheit Sing with the greatest number of troops. The old Begum does, in the most open and violent manner, support Cheit Sing's rebellion and the insurrection, and the Nawab's mother's accursed eunuchs are not less industrious. Capital examples made of Jower Ali Khan and Bahar Ali Khan would, I am persuaded, have the very best effects.'[2]

These statements of Colonel Hannay were fully confirmed by the Resident, Mr. Middleton, an old and experienced servant of the Company. He said of the Begum that, 'strengthened by her immense wealth, which is entrusted to her two chief eunuchs, she is become one of the most serious internal evils that bid fair to give great disturbance to this country.' He described her as a woman of uncommonly violent temper: 'Death and destruction is the least menace she denounces upon the most trifling opposition to her caprice. By her own conduct, and that of all her agents and dependents during the Benares troubles, it may with truth and justice be affirmed, she forfeited every claim she had to the protection of the English Government,

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 1004. [2] Ibid., p. 1005.

as she evidently, and it is confidently said, avowedly espoused the cause of Rajah Cheit Sing, and united in the idea and plan of a general extirpation of their race and power in Hindostan.'[1]

These were the grounds on which the Governor-General believed in the guilt of the Begums, and acted on that belief. He was justly of opinion that when the Begums committed themselves to an act of war against the Bengal Government, they forfeited the guarantee which that Government had given them. It is a maxim of international jurisprudence that a state of war voids all treaties between the belligerent parties. It was not the Governor-General who violated the guarantee, it was the Begums who annulled it by their own act. When they, through their warlike eunuchs, sent troops to assist Cheit Sing, and fomented the Benares outbreak, they themselves abolished all claim on English protection. To Warren Hastings the resumption of the jagirs was not only a measure of sound policy but also just. He likewise considered it both impolitic and unjust to leave the Begums in the possession of a large amount of treasure.[2] On this he wrote to the Council: 'It may be necessary in this place to inform you that in addition to the former resolution of resuming the Begum's jagir, the Nawab had declared his resolution of reclaiming all the treasures of his family which were in their possession, and to which, by the Mahomedan law, he was entitled. This resolution I have strenuously encouraged and supported, not so much for the reasons assigned by the Nawab, as because I think it equally unjust and impolitic that they should be allowed to retain the means of which they have already made so pernicious a use by exciting disturbances in the country and a revolt against the Nawab their sovereign. I am not too sanguine in my expectations of the result of these proceedings, but have required and received the Nawab's promise that, whatever acquisition shall be obtained from the issue of them, it shall be primarily

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 51. [2] Ibid., Introd., p. lxxiv.

applied to the discharge of the balance actually due from him to the Company.'[1] In making this stipulation the Governor-General only discharged his duty to the Administration of which he was the head.

There remained, as concerning the Begums, the duty of carrying out the resolutions arrived at in Chunar. A military force, accompanied by the Vizier, was moved up to Fyzabad; the followers of the Begums were assembled there in resistance, but their leaders durst not defy the English power, and these retainers were speedily, without bloodshed, disarmed and disbanded, and the palace was closely invested by the troops. No more provisions were allowed to enter than were necessary for the food of the princesses and their attendants. They were, in fact, imprisoned in their own palace; but no intrusion was made on the zenana, and no personal indignity was offered. It is probable that the Begums suffered a little inconvenience, and may have felt some humiliation. But that was all, and the situation could have been terminated at any moment by yielding what they had no right to keep. For some weeks the ladies obstinately refused to surrender, but ultimately the treasure was given up to the Vizier, who discharged thereout the debt due to the Company.

Before this took place the Governor-General had left for Calcutta, and was certainly not answerable for anything more than the express orders he gave to the Resident that there should be no negotiation nor compromise. But the Vizier, acting on his own authority, though no doubt with the acquiescence, tacit or other, of the Resident, went further, and removed the two eunuchs to Lucknow, where they were treated with some severity; and it was in consequence of that treatment that the treasure was given up. The remark of Mr. Forrest upon this episode in the story is as follows: 'The cruelty practised by the Nawab and his servants has been greatly exaggerated, but it was sufficient to have justified the interference of the Resident. To have

[1] *State Papers*, Vol. III, p. 836.

countenanced it by transmitting the orders of the Vizier was a grave offence. But for what took place Hastings at Calcutta cannot be held responsible.'[1] This may be safely taken as a true and just comment by an impartial inquirer into the facts.

The tale of the Begums, simply told in the preceding pages, without either concealment on the one hand, or embellishment on the other, differs widely from the fiction of Macaulay. Let us take the statement in the *Essay* by steps. It begins by thus describing the treaty of Chunar. 'At first sight it might appear impossible that the negotiation should come to an amicable close. Hastings wanted an extraordinary supply of money. Asaph-ul-Dowla wanted to obtain a remission of what he already owed. Such a difference seemed to admit of no compromise. There was, however, one course satisfactory to both sides, one course in which it was possible to relieve the finances both of Oude and Bengal; and that course was adopted. It was simply this, that the Governor-General and the Vizier should join to rob a third party; and the third party whom they determined to rob was the parent of one of the robbers.'

Now the first article of the treaty was occupied with an arrangement to relieve the finances of Oude by reducing the number of the Company's troops and of the English officers in the service of the Nawab; and also with regulating the amount of his private income, and securing the management of the public revenue. The second article was directed to the abolition of the great fiefs of territory owned by various feudatories, which had been found to produce confusion and disorder in the country. It is true that the Begums held some of these fiefs, and were, in common with many other landholders, made to suffer resumption under the treaty; but it is also true that Warren Hastings stipulated, in discharge of the guarantee given by the Company, that full compensation should be paid. That compensation was

[1] *State Papers*, Introd., p. lxxv.

secured to the Begums by way of pensions, and those pensions are to this day, according to Sir Alfred Lyall, paid to their representatives. So far, at any rate, it is surely an abuse of language to speak of the treaty as 'robbery'.

But then the *Essay* comes to deal with the question of the treasure. 'They' (the Begums) 'had possessed great influence over Sujah Dowla, and had at his death been left a splendid dotation. The treasure hoarded by the late Nawab, a treasure which was popularly estimated at near three millions sterling, was in their hands. . . . Asaph-ul-Dowla had already extorted considerable sums from his mother. She had at length appealed to the English; and the English had interfered. A solemn compact had been made, by which she consented to give her son some pecuniary assistance, and he in his turn promised never to commit any further invasion of her rights. This compact was formally guaranteed by the Government of Bengal. But times had changed; money was wanted; and the power which had given the guarantee was not ashamed to instigate the spoiler to excesses such that even he shrank from them. . . . A pretext was the last thing that Hastings was likely to want. The insurrection at Benares had produced disturbances in Oude. These disturbances it was convenient to impute to the Princesses. Evidence for the imputation there was scarcely any; unless reports wandering from one mouth to another, and gaining something by every transmission, may be called evidence. . . . It was agreed between him' (the Governor-General) 'and the Vizier that the noble ladies should, by a sweeping confiscation, be stripped of their domains and treasures for the benefit of the Company, and that the sums thus obtained should be accepted by the Government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the Government of Oude.'

The politest thing to say of the sentences above quoted is that from beginning to end they are unhistorical. Macaulay was a great writer, and probably his most

cherished ambition was to be thought a great historian. Yet it would seem that in his desire to write brilliantly, to write dramatically, he continually missed the truth that the foundation of all history must lie in accuracy as to facts.

Judged by that standard, it is difficult to find much history in the above quotation. It is not true that the treasure in the vaults of their zenana was a 'dotation' of the princesses. It was money belonging to the State, of which the first and proper use was to pay the State debts. That it was in the actual hands of the Begums is correct, but it was so in defiance of law and custom, and therefore wrongfully. It could be justly reclaimed by the legal owner.

Nor is it true that Asaph-ul-Dowla had 'extorted' sums from his mother. On the contrary, it was she who had extorted from him jagirs to the extent of four times the value of the money she had advanced to him.

It is equally untrue that the Begum 'had at length appealed to the English'. It was Asaph-ul-Dowla who appealed to the Resident in his distress; and the Resident strongly expostulated with the lady on her conduct to her son. In this respect the statement in the *Essay* is a complete inversion of the facts.

But again; to say, in reference to the disturbances in Oude and Benares, that it was a 'pretext' on the part of Hastings, that it was convenient to impute those disturbances to the princesses, and that there was no evidence for the imputation, is an unjustifiable slander, as well as a denial of plain facts. Are the dispatches of Colonel Hannay not evidence? Are the statements of the Resident to go for nothing? Of course that was the policy of the authors of the Impeachment; every one who did not support their accusations was a liar and an accomplice; but was it the business of a distinguished public man, fifty years after, to cast, or to insinuate, unworthy libels on honourable servants of the State, and on their illustrious Head?

Lastly, it is not true that there was any measure of con-

fiscation, sweeping or other, put in force against 'the noble ladies'. For the resumption of their domains the Begums were fully compensated, at the time and in perpetuity; and to speak of the enforced surrender of the late Vizier's hoard, which had never been theirs legally or morally, and of its restoration to the owner, as confiscation and robbery, is to misuse words. Nor is it true that this treasure was accepted by the Government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the Government of Oude (which implies that it took the whole), whereas the Bengal Government took nothing but the sum long due to it, and took that sum from the Vizier, in whose hands the residue of the treasure remained. Was there ever, let the reader say, a greater travesty of historical statement than this?

Sir Alfred Lyall, whose clearly-written account of these transactions is in close accordance with what appears in the preceding pages, makes a remark at the close with which it is impossible to agree. He condemns any 'measures of coercion against women and eunuchs as unworthy and indefensible'. Unless it is meant that all members of the gentler sex, and those of no sex at all, are to be at liberty to do what they choose irrespective of law and justice (which would be a strange doctrine), we cannot understand this expression. To bring the question home, let us consider it by the light of English usage, and, we may add, of English common sense. We do not believe that in fundamental ideas of truth and equity the East can differ much from the West. Let us suppose that these ladies of the zenana had been Englishwomen of noble birth and position, and that they (as such English ladies have done before now, and may come to do again) refused to give up to its owner property which did not belong to them. The records of the High Court of Justice will show what happens to Englishwomen, be they duchesses or be they washerwomen, who will not obey the law. They go to prison till they comply with the order of the Court. No doubt this coercion would be disagreeable, and some possibly would agree with

Sir Alfred Lyall, and think it 'indefensible'. But it would be necessary, and it would be enforced. What more did the Begums suffer? In some respects much less, for though imprisoned it was in their own palace, and they were never moved from their secluded apartments.

With regard to the two eunuchs it is another matter, and no English writer can do otherwise than condemn the severity practised upon them by order of the Vizier. That severity was grossly exaggerated by the orators of the Impeachment, but, whatever it was, Warren Hastings knew nothing of it, and, as Mr. Forrest has said, 'cannot be held responsible'. But the notion that the eunuchs, like their mistresses, should have been sacred from coercion, is absurd. Sir Alfred Lyall himself says of them that they 'were certainly not infirm effeminate guardians of the harem, but the chief advisers and agents of the Begums, men of great wealth and influence in the palace, and in command of the armed forces'. It was they who had actively helped the outbreak at Benares, and had stirred up insurrection in Oude. There are abundant instances to be found in history of the prominent part which such persons can play in public affairs. To give one for example: Narses, the intrepid and victorious defender of Italy against northern invasion, was, as Gibbon narrates, a eunuch. It would be grotesque to suppose that he therefore held himself to be free from the obligations of loyalty and law.

There is a curious piece of testimony in regard to one of these two Fyzabad eunuchs to be found in *Voyages and Travels* by Viscount Valentia, who met that personage at Lucknow in 1803. Lord Valentia describes him as a venerable old woman-like being, upwards of eighty, full six feet high, and stout in proportion. 'After all the cruel plunderings which he is stated to have undergone, he is supposed to be worth half a million of money.' Lord Valentia also writes in another place: 'Almas the eunuch paid me a visit. He is held here in much consideration from the prominent part he has borne in politics; from

having once held above half the province of Oude, and from his consequently great riches.' He had afterwards the honour of a visit from Lord Wellesley, then Governor-General. There is no mention of his having made any complaint, and, judging from the account given by Lord Valentia, he had not suffered much, either in purse or person, from the alleged torment and confiscation.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

MACAULAY was by no means the worst of Warren Hastings' accusers. Unconsciously no doubt, he misrepresented here, and embellished there, and wrote injustice when he believed he was recording history. But he was a man of too clear political vision and too statesmanlike a mind to swallow all the calumnies of Burke. This was the more to his honour because his admiration for Burke was extremely high. Macaulay was a Whig of the old school, and to the Old Whigs Burke was a prophet. But the true Whig mind has always been moderate, and Macaulay, while unfortunately adopting much of Burke's view as to the political conduct of Warren Hastings, shrank from his violent and prejudiced abuse of the great Governor-General.

Those who care to undergo the labour of perusing the nine days' speech in reply made by Burke at the close of the Impeachment will certainly be astonished, and perhaps be disgusted, by the scurrility of his language and the incoherence of his accusations. It would seem that to his mind the gifted man who had ruled British India for thirteen years, who had brought it through a great war, and secured for it an honourable peace, was not a statesman at all; he was nothing but 'a fraudulent bullock contractor'. He was not to be spoken of as anything important; he 'was not a tiger or a lion, he was a weasel and a rat'. He was 'captain-general of iniquity', and that of the baser sort. All that he had done was to put money into his own hands, and to pile up riches by the starvation of the people of India. Again and again Burke declared his profound admiration for Clavering, Monson, and Francis, the only wise and incorrupt administrators, as it would appear, that

India had ever seen. No doubt he had adopted their story that Warren Hastings had accumulated four hundred thousand pounds in two and a half years by sheer robbery and peculation. A man who believed this would believe anything, and would never ask for the evidence of facts, nor indeed credit them when they were produced.

Burke affirmed that Warren Hastings was bribed by the Munny Begum to appoint her as the personal guardian of the young Nawab of Bengal. He admitted that there was no proof of the bribe; but there was no need of any proof; it was plain on the face of the transaction that the Governor would never have appointed her unless she had paid him to do so. Again, for what purpose did Warren Hastings cause a new assessment to be made of the landed property in Bengal? Merely to enrich himself; whenever the valuation was raised, of course he put the difference into his pocket. For what did he establish new provincial courts? Simply to grind money out of the people. For what did he go to Benares? To levy a fine enormous in its amount, so that the portion which he might appropriate to himself should be the larger. Why did he harry the Begums, noble ladies who were models of feminine amiability and patience? Of course only to add to his own immense wealth. For what purpose had Oude been misgoverned under its unhappy and persecuted ruler? Solely to satisfy the personal greed of Warren Hastings. And so on through nine days of weary iteration and angry invective, till the impatience of the Lords more than once (as the verbatim report shows) broke through the traditional decorum of their House. The entire accusation, in all its branches, was based on the hypothesis of personal corruption. The details were, mainly, from that mint of lies at which Philip Francis worked with the energy of personal hate; but the substructure throughout was the belief, held by Burke with sincerity as much as with blind passion, that Warren Hastings had had, during his whole period in office, no object but that of making money.

Now what did Macaulay, strong accuser as he was on many other points, say to the charge of corruption? Speaking of the character of Warren Hastings in this regard—we quote from the *Essay*—'There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla War, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the Princesses of Oude added a rupee to his fortune. We will not affirm that in all pecuniary dealings he showed that punctilious integrity, that dread of the faintest appearance of evil, which is now the glory of the Indian civil service. But when the school in which he had been trained and the temptations to which he was exposed are considered, we are more inclined to praise him for his general uprightness with respect to money, than rigidly to blame him for a few transactions which would now be called indelicate and irregular, but which even now would hardly be designated as corrupt. A rapacious man he certainly was not. Had he been so, he would infallibly have returned to his country the richest subject in Europe. We speak within compass when we say that, without applying any extraordinary pressure, he might easily have obtained from the zemindars of the Company's provinces and from neighbouring princes, in the course of thirteen years, more than three millions sterling, and might have outshone the splendour of Carlton House and of the *Palais Royal*. He brought home a fortune such as a Governor-General, fond of state and careless of thrift, might easily, during so long a tenure of office, save out of his legal salary.'

That is a clear and, taken as a whole, a just statement of the case. It proves, at any rate, that Macaulay did not credit the gross imputations brought by the Managers of the Impeachment. Warren Hastings once made a deliberate declaration that he was never, at any period of his life, worth more than a hundred thousand pounds; and there are known facts which bear out the statement. He had bought Daylesford just at the time when the Impeachment proceedings began, and his outlay on the property had

probably commenced in the earlier years of the trial. This may possibly have accounted for some twenty thousand pounds. It cannot now be ascertained with any certainty what were the costs of the defence, but it has generally been assumed that they amounted to at least seventy thousand pounds. He was left practically insolvent when he was discharged from the bar of the House of Lords, and nothing but the munificence of the East India Company saved him from ending his days in absolute penury. It is evident, then, that he could not have had more than a hundred thousand pounds on his return to England, and, reckoning that he may have saved some six or seven thousand a year in Calcutta, the estimate of Macaulay is pretty accurately borne out.

But the passage from the *Essay* quoted above cannot be left without some further observations. It was given at length for the sake of complete candour, but it must not be supposed that its language is acquiesced in throughout. Macaulay's style, in all his writings, is apt to slip into generalities when specific statements are called for, and to evade proof by raising up a cloud of words. When, in speaking of Warren Hastings' public conduct, he intimates a want of 'punctilious integrity' in certain 'pecuniary dealings', he was bound in truth and justice to state with precision what these dealings were. He admits that the Governor-General did not take bribes and did not peculate. What then did he do? Macaulay could not have meant that he took presents in money, for the same paragraph of the *Essay*, in its continuance, expressly contrasts his conduct in this respect with that of his wife, who, it says, 'accepted presents with great alacrity.' But it is added that she did so without the connivance of her husband. This portion of the passage is quoted with reluctance; but it is necessary to make things clear. If, then, Warren Hastings took neither bribes nor pecuniary presents, and kept his hands free from misappropriation, in what way was he other than 'punctilious' in his integrity?



WARREN H

PORTRAIT OF WARREN HASTINGS

Taken and engraved by George Stubbs in 1795. It formed the upper part of an equestrian portrait.

We dwell on this imputation the more because, in an earlier part of the *Essay*, it is said of him that 'he was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions'. This is given as a bare assertion; no commentary is added to elucidate the text. Now if it is meant that in Warren Hastings' time a Governor-General received, in addition to a large salary, lavish allowances for table money and receptions, or that his journeys in the provinces and visits to neighbouring princes were defrayed liberally out of public funds, all this may be true, but such expenditure was open and avowed, known to all men, and wholly free from the taint of malversation. These were the customs of a past time, it may be not entirely non-existent in the present, and looked upon then, perhaps, as a necessary lubrication of the somewhat difficult mechanism of government.

Or, if any allusion was intended to the large sum offered to Warren Hastings at Calcutta, as a personal present, by the agent of the Rajah of Benares, the allusion should have been open and explicit. That affair, viewed in the light of circumstances subsequently disclosed, did nothing but honour to the Governor-General, though maliciously distorted in the tales told by his enemies. He at once refused the offer; but when it was again pressed upon him he agreed to receive the money, not as a present to himself, but as a gift to the Company. At that moment the treasury was desperately empty of cash, the expedition against Scindia (on the success of which the question of making peace turned) was urgently in need of funds, as was the secret service in some other places; and Warren Hastings took the twenty thousand pounds, used it for the public necessities, and subsequently acquainted the Board of Directors with the fact.[1] It was a strong thing to do,

[1] In a letter, dated November 29, 1780, he wrote—'The money was not my own, and I neither could nor would have received it, but for your benefit.' Mr. Forrest says: 'The acceptance of this present was one of the charges of bribery brought against Hastings, but after the various and frank avowals which he made of having

and required a strong man to do it. He was well aware that he ran the risk of misunderstanding and misrepresentation; but he faced the risk, at that critical time, as he faced many others, not in his own interest, but in the interests of British India, to which, by afterwards carrying through the negotiation with Scindia, he restored peace and prosperity.

It was necessary to give a plain reply to the loose intimations of misconduct, or want of proper conduct, in pecuniary matters, made as above by Macaulay. But it is not intended to carry controversy further on the point. What is intended is to deny categorically that any money transaction, public or private, conducted by Warren Hastings was other than punctilious in its integrity, and to challenge contradiction thereon by any testimony of recorded facts.

There are other expressions used in the Essay which cannot be passed by without asking from every impartial reader of the preceding chapters a verdict of repudiation. More than once Macaulay attributes 'crimes' to the Governor-General. When, for instance, he refutes the imputation (assuredly not made herein) that Burke was animated by unworthy motives in his attacks: 'Why

received it, it is impossible to believe that he could have had an idea of converting it to his own use. The perpetual dissensions in Council and the almost unremitted opposition made to the measures proposed by Hastings induced him to do many unconstitutional acts which he would not have done had he been free and unshackled. If he received sums of money without the consent of his colleagues, it must be borne in mind that he also expended sums of money without their participation or consent. He paid without their knowledge three lakhs of rupees for the uninterrupted passage of our army to the coast. Hastings had also often to spend sums of money on secret service which he had every reason to believe the majority would oppose.'

Sir Alfred Lyall (p. 128) speaks of some transaction with the Vizier of Oude, and enlarges the amount to a hundred thousand pounds; but we apprehend that the story is in reality the same as that narrated and commented on in the Introduction to the *State Papers*, Introd., pp. lv, lvi.

should we look for any other explanation of Burke's conduct than that which we find on the surface? The plain truth is that Hastings had committed some great crimes and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins.' So also when speaking of the fate of Nuncoomar: 'While therefore we have not the least doubt that this memorable execution is to be attributed to Hastings, we doubt whether with justice it can be reckoned among his crimes.' And again, at the commencement of a general review (highly laudatory) of his long administration, the *Essay* says: 'it is impossible to deny that, against the great crimes with which it was blemished, we have to set off great public services.' It is clear, therefore, that Macaulay imputes crimes, and in the name of justice and truth, it is asked, *what* crimes?

Now it will be found that there are six leading charges laid against Warren Hastings at one time or another, which are enumerated below; one of them is not pressed as a crime by Macaulay, though strongly condemned.

1. The Rohilla War.
2. Trial and execution of Nuncoomar.
3. Treatment of the Nawab and Emperor.
4. Wars with Mahrattas and Hyder Ali.
5. Affair with Cheit Sing.
6. Affair with the Begums.

We propose to briefly reproduce, under each head, the circumstances narrated above in our pages. To the reader we shall leave it whether in any one instance the word 'crime' is justly applicable.

The Rohilla War is represented in the *Essay* as an unscrupulous device employed by Warren Hastings to obtain money for the Company; as a bargain which he drove with Sujah-ul-Dowla, the Vizier of Oude, to lend him English troops for the conquest of Rohilcund and the extirpation of the Rohilla tribes, in consideration of a sum of four hundred thousand pounds paid by the Vizier.

The real facts were very different. They are stated at

length (with authorities) in our second chapter, and, put shortly, they are these. The Rohillas brought on the war by their own perfidious and dangerous conduct. When their territory was invaded by the Mahrattas, whom they were unable to resist, they were glad enough of help both from Oude and from Calcutta. Help was given and the Mahrattas were driven off. The Rohillas covenanted, in a treaty witnessed and countersigned by the English Commander, to pay the Vizier the sum of forty lacs. They never paid a rupee; and it was discovered that they were secretly intriguing with the Mahrattas in order to evade the obligation. Their perfidy gave the Vizier a just provocation to war, and gave us a valid reason for assisting our ally. Of all this Macaulay says nothing. When Warren Hastings was at Benares, arranging with Sujah-ul-Dowla the terms of the treaty by which Korah and Allahabad were ceded to the Vizier, a proposal was made by the latter that he should, in order to punish the Rohilla treachery, have the aid of some English troops, for which he was ready to pay. Warren Hastings discouraged the idea, contented himself with saying that, if such an arrangement were made, the terms would necessarily be heavy, and went back to Calcutta without giving any assent. The Vizier subsequently wrote, renewing the proposal. Warren Hastings was by this time fully informed of the plots of the Rohillas; he concluded that war against them was just; he foresaw the danger to our own territory if they allied themselves with the Mahrattas; and perceived that the annexation of Rohilcund to Oude would carry out his policy of strengthening the north-western frontier. He laid the letter of the Vizier before the Council, and explained the whole situation. After long and anxious consideration the Council resolved to assist the Vizier, and ordered a brigade to advance into Oude for that purpose. The war was cut short by one sharp conflict, which broke the Rohilla power, usurped some sixty years before. The atrocities so luridly described in the *Essay* were contradicted by eye-witnesses

at the time, and may be dismissed as gross exaggerations or malicious inventions. The net result, as given by Mr. Forrest, is, that 'about seventeen or eighteen hundred Rohillas, with their families, were expelled from Rohilcund, and Hindu inhabitants, amounting to about seven hundred thousand, remained in possession of their patrimonial acres, and were seen cultivating their fields in peace.'[1] This is the true statement of the case, and its difference from the rhetorical account given by Macaulay is the difference between fact and fiction.

2. The charge made in the matter of Nuncoomar, a high priest of the order of Brahmins, and a man of marked ability and influence, though of evil character, was this: it was alleged that Warren Hastings, having been accused by Nuncoomar before the Council of taking bribes and other peculation, suborned the prosecution of his accuser on a charge of forgery, the transaction out of which the charge arose having taken place six years before; that Nuncoomar was, under this accusation, brought to trial before Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice, who was described as in collusion with the Governor-General, arraigned before an English jury, found guilty, sentenced to death, and hanged. All this being brought about by Warren Hastings to silence a dangerous enemy.

The entire story has been shown to be absolutely untrue. Years ago, Sir James Stephen, a Judge of the English High Court of Justice, who had, when serving as a member of Council at Calcutta, the opportunity of looking into the history of the case, proved conclusively in his *Story of Nuncoomar* that Warren Hastings was innocent of the conduct imputed to him. The account given in the Introduction to the *State Papers* shows also that the accusation was not only untrue but was impossible. It proves that the proceedings which led to the arrest and trial of Nuncoomar were commenced six weeks before he made any charge

[1] See also the explicit and authoritative statement by Sir John Strachey, given in our second chapter.

against the Governor-General, who could have had, therefore, no motive or interest in the matter.

The solemn declaration made by Warren Hastings on oath before the Supreme Court, that he had never interfered in any way with the trial, or had anything to do with the prosecution, was absolutely true.

3. Treatment of the Nawab of Bengal and of the Emperor of Delhi. These matters embodied the charges made by Macaulay when speaking of the need of bettering the finances of Bengal, and there can be no doubt that he reckoned them among what he termed the great crimes of Warren Hastings' administration. It is best to give the accusation in Macaulay's own words: 'A mind so fertile as his, and so little restrained by conscientious scruples,[1] speedily discovered several modes of relieving the financial embarrassments of the Government. The allowance of the Nabob of Bengal was reduced at a stroke from three hundred and twenty thousand a year to half that sum. The Company had bound itself to pay near three hundred thousand pounds a year to the great Mogul, as a mark of homage for the provinces which he had entrusted to their care; and they had ceded to him the districts of Corah and Allahabad. On the plea that the Mogul was not really independent, but merely a tool in the hands of others, Hastings determined to retract these concessions. He accordingly declared that the English would pay no more tribute, and sent troops to occupy Corah and Allahabad. The situation of these places was such that there would be little advantage and great expense in retaining them. Hastings, who wanted money and not territory, determined to sell them. A purchaser was not wanting. . . . Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob Vizier, was on excellent terms with the English. He had a large treasure. Allahabad and Corah were so situated that they might be of use to him and could be of none to the Company. The buyer and seller soon came to an

[1] The reader will observe this imputation of motive, unsupported by proof, and unwarrantable.

understanding, and the provinces which had been torn from the Mogul were made over to the Government of Oude for about half a million of pounds sterling.' This passage is a grave misrepresentation of the real facts, and was written, probably enough, in reliance on the distorted statements made by Burke, who in turn was indebted for his information to the inventions of Philip Francis.

The reduction of the income allowed to the Nawab of Bengal (at that time a minor under the guardianship of the Munny Begum) was made, quite equitably, in consequence of the abolition of the double government in Bengal, one of the most salutary measures which the statesmanship of Warren Hastings ever achieved. It was one thing to pay the Nawab a lavish allowance when he was the ruling prince of Bengal; it would have been quite another to continue such a payment when he had become simply a great noble. In his changed position an allowance of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year can hardly be considered other than liberal. It is curious that Macaulay, who counted the abolition of the double government among the conspicuous merits of Warren Hastings' administration, did not perceive that the one change in the Nawab's position was naturally consequent on the other.

The supersession of the payment to the Delhi Emperor was on different grounds, but was equally defensible. When the Emperor was driven from Delhi by the menace of the Mahratta hordes, the provinces of Korah and Allahabad were secured to him by the Company, as a sure refuge and a means to maintain his dignity. It is true they had also agreed to pay him a yearly revenue of about three hundred thousand pounds in return for his grant of the three provinces of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. All this was before the time of Warren Hastings' rulership. When he became Governor the relations of the Emperor to the Mahrattas, and consequently to the English, had greatly changed. The Mahrattas, always restless, had found it politic to make friends with the Emperor. They had restored him to his

palace at Delhi, had themselves occupied Korah and Allahabad, and were swaying, for their own purposes, the policy of the Court at Delhi. This was a state of things which Warren Hastings refused to tolerate.[1] Through all the years of his government he was specially sensitive to the safety of the north-western frontier of the Company's provinces. He knew Mahratta ways; he knew their habit of secret intrigue, as he knew their custom of predatory invasion. He was resolved, in protection of the territory committed to his charge, to oust them from Allahabad and Korah. He moved up a force for that purpose, and the Mahrattas prudently retired. It was not Warren Hastings who had torn these districts from the Emperor; it was the Emperor himself who had ceded them to the Mahrattas. It is true that the Governor sold them to the Vizier, on whose territory they abutted, and who was in a position to defend them. In that respect the constant object of strengthening the frontier was pursued. The sale was as wise in policy as it was financially opportune.

The revenue paid to the Emperor was for the maintenance of his independence, and also to preserve the common interests of the Empire. It was never intended, and it could not be borne, that it should be used to subsidize a lawless and rapacious power, and to furnish arms for aggression. Warren Hastings refused then, as he always refused, to supply out of the revenues of the Company, either to

[1] On October 12, 1773, Warren Hastings stated the case clearly to the Council, in answer to Sir Robert Barker: 'The Government bestowed the districts of Corah and Allahabad upon the King Shah Allum of its own free will "for the support of his dignity and expenses." He first abandoned, and afterwards, by a solemn grant, he gave them away to the Mahrattas. We disapproved of the grant, because it frustrated the purpose for which these lands were bestowed on the King, and because we saw danger in admitting so powerful a neighbour on the borders of our ally. It was therefore resolved to resume the possession of those lands, not from the King, whose property and right were annulled by his own alienation of them, but from the Mahrattas, their new proprietors.'—*State Papers*, vol. I, p. 71.

known enemies or to dubious friends, any pecuniary resource. He cut off the payment to the Emperor, because the position of that potentate had become, in respect to English interests, of doubtful augury.

4. The Mahratta War owed its origin to the rashness of the Governor and Council of Bombay. They espoused the cause of one Raghoba, a claimant to the office of the Peishwa, the virtual head of the Mahratta Confederacy. To support the pretender's claim, and in hopes of thus establishing a control over the Confederacy, the Bombay Government ordered a military force to advance towards Poonah. Against this act, as being beyond the powers of a subordinate Presidency, and in itself unjust and impolitic, Warren Hastings protested vigorously. He wrote a dispatch, ordering that the expedition sent should be recalled, unless it had already obtained some decisive success; which, as it turned out, it had actually done. But the hostile majority in the Council at Calcutta overruled the Governor-General, and resolved that the force should be recalled unconditionally. This fatal course was the beginning of much misfortune. The Mahrattas, encouraged by the show of weakness, refused for some time to make peace; and when they did so, the treaty of Purandhar, approved by the majority of the Council, was of such a nature that it was signed against the wish, and with no more than the reluctant assent, of Warren Hastings.

When the Governor-General, owing to the deaths of Monson and Clavering, recovered the control of his Council, he discovered that a French agent[1] was at Poonah, openly received by the Mahratta Government, and believed to be engaged in secret negotiations with them. Warren Hastings, in accordance with his usual policy, determined to strike the first blow. He sent a military force across India to menace Poonah, and he withdrew the interdict against the action of the Bombay Government. For this he was afterwards fiercely denounced by Burke, and the long and doubtful

[1] The Chevalier de St. Lubin.

contest which ensued was laid with much malediction at his door. But looking at the relations then existing between France and England, the course pursued seems to have been both statesmanlike and salutary. Macaulay expresses the opinion that if other circumstances (such as the invasion by Hyder Ali) had not intervened, Warren Hastings would have seen his measures against the Mahrattas crowned with success. As it was, though faced by herculean difficulties, he held his own against all odds, triumphed finally over all reverses, and obtained by persistent efforts an honourable peace.

The provocations given to Hyder Ali and the Nizam were most unfortunate, resulting as they did in the terrible invasion of the Carnatic, and in a desolating though, in some respects, glorious war. But these errors and misfeasances were in no way due to Warren Hastings. It was his misfortune at this crisis that while on the one side of India he had to meet and remedy the shortcomings at Bombay, he had on the other to deal with the mistakes and misconduct at Madras. It was not he who engaged in a discreditable intrigue against the Nizam, nor he who neglected all preparation against the hosts of Hyder. But he had to face the consequences of both blunders and of much else beside. He had not only to guard Bengal when threatened with foreign invasion, and beset with treacherous revolt, but he had simultaneously on his shoulders the two subordinate Presidencies, helpless alike in policy and finance. The dangers and difficulties due to others were confronted by him with matchless courage and address. It was owing to his administrative skill, diplomatic adroitness, and rare tenacity of purpose, that a great combination of opponents was overcome, and that rest was finally given to India.

5. The answer to the charge made in relation to Cheit Sing is short and simple. It is that the charge was founded originally and rests to this day on a mistake in fact. It was assumed by the Managers of the Impeachment, and has been believed by thousands of readers, that Cheit Sing was an independent and sovereign prince, not accountable

to the Calcutta Government in any way, so long as he paid his fixed tribute.

Macaulay, we are convinced, thought otherwise. In a carefully reasoned passage he intimates his opinion that the correct course was to acquit on the Benares charge. Yet in an earlier page he had these words: 'The English government now chose to wring money out of Cheit Sing. It had formerly been convenient to treat him as a sovereign prince; it was now convenient to treat him as a subject. Dexterity inferior to that of Hastings could easily find, in the general chaos of laws and customs, arguments for either course.' A more misleading statement was never written. No one in India, or possessed of any knowledge of India, ever could, or ever did, think of Cheit Sing as a sovereign prince, for the good reason that all the facts, plain on the surface of things, defied such a supposition. Grandson of an adventurer, son of a farmer of the revenue, himself a vassal of the Vizier of Oude, who fined him at pleasure, handed over in his position of vassal, with all its customary obligations, to the Company, which thenceforth became his suzerain; what title to independence had Cheit Sing? None in any way; except, indeed, in his own fatal dreams, when he fancied that the English were about to be driven from India, and he hoped to be elevated on their ruin.

In effect, Cheit Sing was a zemindar, though a great one, of the Company, and was justly treated as such by the Governor-General. It is true that the fine imposed was heavy; but it was intended as a punishment for his contumacy and intrigue, as well as a contribution required by the State in its urgent necessity. The whole proceeding was legal; it was approved by the only other Member of Council available at the time; and no candid inquirer into its history will find, on the part of Warren Hastings, anything in the nature of a crime.

It may be recorded as noteworthy that after all the fervid oratory of Burke, only six peers could be found to vote in support of the Benares charge.

6. The charge brought against Warren Hastings in regard to the Begums of Oude, was nothing less than this; that he conspired with the Vizier, Asaph-ul-Dowla, to rob two helpless ladies, Princesses of Oude, mother and grandmother to one of the conspirators, despoiling them of a large sum of money, besides depriving them of their landed estates. It has been widely believed that this charge was true.

As a fact, the money in question was not the lawful property of the Begums. It was the treasure that had been accumulated by the former Vizier, Sujah-ul-Dowla, and by the law of the Koran it belonged to his son and successor. The Begums had kept him out of most of it, relying on the protection of the zenana, and had received in return for the comparatively small portion they gave up, jaghires (i. e. landed estates) of far greater value. For the rest they set the Vizier at defiance, and maintained a considerable armed force under the command of their two chief eunuchs. They might have retained all undisturbed, had they remained quiet. But when the Benares insurrection broke out, the Begums, through their agents and followers, aided the insurgents; in fact, waged war against the Company. Warren Hastings thereupon withdrew the guarantee that had been formerly given to them, and treated them as open enemies.

At this time the Vizier owed a large amount to the Calcutta Government. He explained that owing to the detention of the treasure by the Begums, he had no means to pay. As the Governor-General represented the chief creditor of the Vizier, he agreed to assist in the recovery of the money. This was done. The Begums' forces were disarmed, their jaghires were resumed, and their palace blockaded by English troops. After a stubborn resistance, in which, however, no blood was shed, the treasure was given up to the Vizier by the eunuchs, and out of it the obligations due to the Company were discharged. The Begums received pensions in compensation for their jaghires.

They were never personally molested during the whole affair.

The treatment of the eunuchs, contumacious as they were, is not defensible; but for this the Resident at Lucknow was alone responsible.

Unless it be criminal to assist in compelling persons illegally possessed of property to restore it to its lawful owner (a proceeding which is habitually carried out by our Courts), it is difficult to see how Warren Hastings can be charged with crime in this matter.

The short summaries given above of the circumstances out of which the six principal charges originated, have been written with careful candour, with no other object than that of stating the real facts, and it is believed that in every instance they will stand the test of impartial inquiry. It is submitted that in no case can any proof of crime of any kind be established. To suppose that in every transaction above described there was no error, no fault in design, no imperfection as to detail, would be to believe that human nature was absent from the history. But to suppose shortcoming, or, if you will, frailty, is not to suggest crime, unless you are to expel moral justice from the consideration of public acts. It is this want of moral justice which condemns Macaulay for the repeated assumptions of guilt in his estimate of Warren Hastings' character and services.

It may be easy, for example, to find fault with the details of the Benares business. As it turned out it is clear that a more powerful force than the slender escort of the Governor-General should have been summoned, before such a step as the arrest of the Rajah was attempted. Warren Hastings was accustomed to obedience from the Natives, and was probably encouraged by the almost abject submission shown at first by Cheit Sing. It must, however, be admitted that he did not exhibit his usual judgement in the subsequent proceeding. Lamentable results followed; but it would surely be preposterous to charge him with

crime, because he made one of his few mistakes. Take the case of a military commander. If he surrenders a fortress which he knows to be defensible, still more if he does so corruptly, he is shot, and no man questions the justice of the sentence. But if what he does is to make a mistake in tactics, such as Beresford made at Albuera and Gough made at Chilliawallah, what critic does not feel that gallant services outweigh even a grave mistake?

The same just and generous rule applies equally to civil affairs, and it should be observed, if history is to be written with fairness. Certainly it should be observed as to such a man as Warren Hastings, in considering not only the leading charges made against him with so much virulence, but the whole story of his official life. It would be strange indeed if during thirteen years of Governorship, marked by events of strenuous difficulty, in foreign policy, in domestic administration, and not least in finance, no mistake was ever made. A wide administration necessitates a large patronage, and it would be idle to suppose that the best man was invariably selected, or that merit was never postponed to favour in Bengal any more than in England. A strenuous war, waged over half a continent, called continually for a choice of the best officers, and the choice made was usually wise; but, no doubt, instances may be found, as at the commencement of the Mahratta war, after the treaty of Purandhar had been swept away, where the choice may have been unfortunate. In other words, Warren Hastings was a mortal man, and his administration, whether in war or in peace, was subject to the incidents of human imperfection. Was the management of successive Ministries in Great Britain, at the same period, distinguished by greater success? Was it not rather that the star of England sank everywhere save where Warren Hastings upheld her flag?

Granting, then, in the thirteen years, many occasional imperfections and mistakes, are these more than spots on the sun when weighed against the extraordinary services

of the Governor-General? It is well to turn to the pages of Macaulay, and see what a critic, sometimes hostile, often misinformed or mistaken, but not wanting in generosity, says on this point. He, as we have shown some pages back, disdained to approve the coarse imputations of peculation and corruption. He was able in this respect to do justice to the statesman who saved India.

Thus, in speaking of the many losses sustained by England in the war she had waged against a combination of powers, he says: 'The only quarter of the world in which Britain had lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings. In spite of the utmost exertions both of European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented. Benares was subjected; the Nabob Vizier reduced to vassalage. That our influence had been thus extended, nay, that Fort William and Fort St. George had not been occupied with hostile armies, was owing, if we may trust the general voice of the English in India, to the skill and resolution of Hastings.'

He spoke, too, in the highest terms, of the internal administration of the Governor-General. 'He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy he educed at least a rude and imperfect order. The whole organization by which justice was dispensed, revenue collected, peace maintained throughout a territory not inferior in population to the dominions of Louis the Sixteenth or of the Emperor Joseph, was formed and superintended by him. . . . Whoever seriously considers what it is to construct from the beginning the whole of a machine so vast and complex as a government will allow that what Hastings effected deserves high admiration. . . . It must be added that, while engaged in this most arduous task, he was constantly trammelled by orders from home, and frequently borne down by a majority in council. The preservation of an Empire from a formidable combination

of foreign enemies, the construction of a government in all its parts, were accomplished by him, while every ship brought out bales of censure from his employers, and while the records of every consultation were filled with acrimonious minutes from his colleagues.'

We have, in other places, been compelled to quote passages from the *Essay* in order to confute errors or to comment on unfairness. It has been painful to do so; and it is all the more consolatory now to give these sentences, worthy of a great writer, in just appreciation of a great statesman. It is only to be regretted that Macaulay did not consult more and study carefully 'the records' of which he speaks. Those Minutes of proceedings in the Council contain the true history of Warren Hastings' Governorship, and it is they which testify of him. Had Macaulay, during the years when he had ample opportunity, searched them thoroughly and looked up other documentary evidence at Calcutta, he would have been saved from many errors. He would not have described Nuncoomar's trial as taken before Sir Elijah Impey alone. He would not have affirmed that Warren Hastings made a bargain at Benares with Sujah-ul-Dowla to extirpate the Rohillas, nor would he have written an extravagant account of (supposed) horrors perpetrated on that people. He would not have stated that Korah and Allahabad were 'torn from the Mogul.' He would not have said that Cheit Sing had been treated by the English authorities as a sovereign prince; nor would he have depicted the Begums as 'robbed' of treasures which were never theirs, except by deceit and violence on their own part.

In one respect Macaulay did look carefully into the facts; he did so as to the conduct of the war. It is observable that on this point he has nothing but praise for Warren Hastings. It would be difficult indeed to arrive at any other opinion; for it is certain that when France declared war and when Hyder Ali broke into the Carnatic, the salvation of British interests in Hindustan

was due to the Governor-General. It was not simply that he was foremost in the effort; he had neither companion nor competitor; he stood alone. When others hesitated and shook; when Philip Francis quailed before the storm and counselled the abandonment of the Carnatic; Warren Hastings, 'with Palinure's unaltered mood,' at once rose to the emergency, shipped off Coote with troops and money to Madras, calmly faced the danger to Bengal, by sheer courage and firmness carried the ship of state through the hurricane, and brought her safe into port. He was a great war minister, and yet it is to be observed that he never made war except in defence. During his thirteen years of rule he never annexed a single province. His policy was never aggressive; it was habitually prudent and watchful, though, when needful, it was bold. His leading idea was to unite, by pacific treaties, the various Native states around the centre of our government, and thus to make British influence predominant throughout India. It may be noted, too, that he desired to see the Company's territories placed under the direct rule of the Crown, and he opened his views on this subject to the Prime Minister of the day. It was three-quarters of a century before that idea was realized; but it is probable that the prescience of Warren Hastings foresaw the future day, and it is certain that if he could have lived to hail it, none would have rejoiced more when the crown of Timour was placed on the head of our Sovereign.

But it may be confidently averred that nothing in his whole career was more remarkable that the moral elevation which he gave to Indian administration and policy. He had been in Calcutta during the governorship of Vansittart, and in that welter of corruption had kept his hands clean. When he returned as Governor his first effort was to substitute civilized rule for anarchy. He succeeded. He raised the service of the Company from the low level of a sordid scramble for wealth to the high plane of statesmanship and patriotism. It was a moral revolution; and the glorious

history of Anglo-Indian administration dates from that change.

Warren Hastings was, in sober truth, the founder of British India; and whatever the merits of his successors, it is owing to him, alike in peace and war, that England now holds her vast Eastern empire. He said no more than was his right when in Westminster Hall, after enduring the flood of calumny and insult poured on him by the orators of the Impeachment, he at length burst out with indignant words, that should be known and remembered by all Englishmen:—

'The valour of others acquired, I enlarged and gave shape and consistency to the dominion which you hold there; I preserved it; I sent forth its armies with an effectual but economical hand, through unknown and hostile regions, to the support of your other possessions; to the retrieval of one[1] from degradation and dishonour; and of the other[2] from utter loss and subjection. I maintained the wars which were of your formation, or that of others, not of mine. I won one member[3] of the great Indian confederacy from it by an act of seasonable restitution; with another[4] I maintained a secret intercourse, and converted him into a friend; a third[5] I drew off by diversion and negotiation, and employed him as the instrument of peace. When you cried out for peace, and your cries were heard by those who were the object of it, I resisted this, and every other species of counteraction, by rising in my demands, and accomplished a peace, and I hope everlasting, with one great State,[6] and I at least afforded the efficient means by which a peace, if not so durable, more seasonable at least, was accomplished with another.[7]

'I gave you all, and you have rewarded me with confiscation, disgrace, and a life of impeachment.'[8]

Such were his services, and such was the return! It was

[1] Bombay. [2] Madras. [3] The Nizam. [4] Moodajee Boosla.
[5] Maharajah Scindia. [6] The Mahrattas. [7] Tippoo Sahib.
[8] *State Papers*, Introd., p. xc.

with good reason that the Prince Regent, when, in 1814, he presented Warren Hastings to the Allied Sovereigns, described him as 'the most ill-used man in the dominions of the Crown'.

That ill-usage will continue so long as it is believed, and suffered to be written or said, that the founder of British India, its preserver in war and its lawgiver in peace, committed crimes, great or small, during his illustrious sway. That belief cannot continue, it will not be tolerated, when the truth is once popularly and fully known. The three Volumes of State Papers, so carefully collected and so ably commented on by Mr. Forrest, demonstrate the moral integrity of Warren Hastings as clearly as they do his intellectual greatness. It is on the incontrovertible evidence of those State Papers that the foregoing Vindication mainly rests.

It may not be inappropriate to subjoin here a chapter on Daylesford, bound up as its name must be with the memory of Warren Hastings. That secluded spot was the nursery of his race, the dream of his boyhood, the hope of his strenuous life. It became the shelter of his declining years, and is now the guardian of his dust.

CHAPTER IX

DAYLESFORD

DAYLESFORD is a parish of great antiquity in the county of Worcester, but one outlying from the bulk of the shire, and forming an island in the surrounding borders of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire. Its old Saxon church, built and endowed by Ethelwald, King of the Mercians, and restored in its identically ancient form by Warren Hastings, was an object of much interest to antiquarians, as one of the few undoubted Saxon churches remaining in the country. It was, lamentably, destroyed some fifty years since, but the chancel arch of the original structure has been preserved in the vestry of the exceptionally beautiful modern church. The parish seems, for some reason now unknown, to have been favoured by ecclesiastical authority; for when, in King John's time, the whole of England was placed under interdict by the Pope, four parishes were reserved in which burial could take place with the rites of the Church, and one of those four was Daylesford.

As early as the reign of Henry the Second the manor was held by one of the Hastings family,[1] and Nash has

[1] Macaulay, in his *Essay on Warren Hastings*, treats the claim made by Penyston Hastings, no mean antiquary, that the family were descended from Hastings the sea-king, as fabulous. 'The undoubted splendour of the line of Hastings,' says he, 'needs no illustration from fable.' But is it certainly a fable? It is known that the famous sea-king, after his submission to Alfred and his conversion to Christianity, settled in Normandy, having obtained a grant of lands from Duke Rollo. The late Duchess of Cleveland, in her classic work on the Roll of Battle Abbey, points out that the Hastings who fought in the battle and was progenitor of his race in England, appears in the Roll under the name of his property in France. Was this the land granted by Rollo? If so, the descent from the sea-king (the period that had elapsed was not much more

shown in his *Worcestershire* that it was for more than 400 years in their continuous possession. The ancient manor house, of which no trace now remains, stood near the church. It is mentioned in the *Biographical Illustrations of Worcestershire* by Chambers, who says the remains showed that it had been a grand structure; but this statement must be taken with some reservation. Daylesford was a small manor, and though it be true that its owners were lords of other manors (John Hastings the Cavalier is reputed to have sold four of them during the Civil War) yet, if we are to judge by their manor of Yelford-Hastings, situated south of Oxford, a favourite residence of John Hastings, these estates were of no great size. Yelford was made over to Speaker Lenthall in composition for the fine levied on John Hastings by the Long Parliament, and the house has been preserved by the Lenthall family in the same state in which it was handed over to their ancestor. It consists of a good-sized hall, manifestly the living-room, with the arms and monogram of John Hastings[1] over the mantelpiece, and a withdrawing room or parlour. This, of course with offices and bedrooms, is all; and supposing that the manor house at Daylesford was double the size, it could hardly have presented many features of grandeur. Moreover, Chambers' work was published in 1820, more than a century after Daylesford had been sold to a Mr.

than a century and a half) may have been direct. The word Hastings is Danish, and it is believed that there is still on the coast of Denmark an ancient port, now sunk to a fishing-village, of that name. As the town and castle of Hastings were in existence at the date of the Conquest, and gave name (among the Normans) to the battle, it is quite conceivable that the descendant of the sea-king recognized his ancient patronymic and resumed it thereupon.

[1] John Hastings retired to France at the close of the Civil War, and lived for some time at the little border town of St. Jean de Luz, close to Spain. When he returned after the Restoration he brought with him some seeds of the sainfoin grass, and Daylesford was the first parish in England in which that grass was grown. He thus conferred no small boon on English agriculture.

Knight, a merchant of Bristol, who treated the manor house much as the church was treated in a future century, in other words pulled it down totally. How any 'remains' could have testified to its former character it is difficult to understand. In its stead Mr. Knight, who was evidently a man of his age, erected a square-built house.

The last Hastings who, for some eighty years, was connected with Daylesford, was the rector of the parish, Penyston Hastings, a younger son presented to the living by his father before the estate was sold. The name of Penyston was derived from an inter-marriage with the Penystons of Cornwell Manor, a picturesque old house situated in an adjacent parish. The rector soon found himself in a disagreeable position with reference to the new lord of the manor, who involved him in legal disputations, familiar enough to any one versed in the country life of those days, over the payment of his tithes; and Penyston eventually, though retaining the benefice, moved to the village of Churchill, a few miles distant from Daylesford, and there rented a comfortable house. In that house Warren Hastings was born.

There is no doubt that the history of the family at this time is involved in much obscurity. The cause of this obscurity may have been the dispersion of its members consequent on the sale of Daylesford; most of them went elsewhere to seek their fortune; several, probably, to that perpetual refuge for all hunters after prosperity, the metropolis. But whatever the cause, the result was sure; when the name began again to attract attention a growth of legend and mistake had enveloped the original facts. The accounts of the marriage which produced so celebrated a man as Warren Hastings, and of the married life (short as it was) of his parents, are worthy of mediaeval romance. Gleig stated and Macaulay adopted and other writers have reproduced the figment that Penyston Hastings the younger, as we call him to distinguish from his father, was only fifteen years old when he married Hester Warren. Macaulay



HOUSE AT CHURCHILL

In which Warren Hastings was born, 1732

To face p. 190.

may be partly excused; he naturally conceived that Gleig, writing as was supposed in the interest of the Hastings family, must have had correct information; and the later retailers of this nonsense may plead that they were misled by Macaulay. But for Gleig there can be no excuse. Of course he was at Daylesford when preparing for his coming biography, and we must suppose heard something on the subject from somebody; though it is difficult to conjecture what he heard and from whom he heard it. It is certain that Warren Hastings left no such statement in writing, for had he done so Gleig, who was great at quoting, would assuredly have given it. Mrs. Hastings, if she were living at the time of Gleig's visit, which perhaps is doubtful,[1] must have been far advanced in age, was a foreigner by birth, not wholly perhaps proficient in the English tongue, and little likely to be informed as to the previous history of the family. Her son, Sir Charles Imhoff, then residing at Daylesford, knew nothing but what he heard from others, and could be no authority. Possibly Mrs. Hastings had misconceived something that had been said to her, or Gleig mistook the meaning of some conversation.[2] Of course no one imputes any untruth or bad faith. But the point is this: however he may have picked it up, it was the clear duty of Gleig to investigate so strange a tale. The village of Churchill is within an easy drive, nay, within a good walk of Daylesford. Gleig knew that Warren Hastings was born at Churchill, for he states the fact himself; and if he had gone there and consulted the parish register, he would have found that Penyston Hastings the younger was a clergyman in holy orders of the Church of England at the time that his son was baptized, two years after the marriage; that is, when according to the legend Penyston could have been only seventeen years of age. As a fact he was in holy orders when he married,

[1] She died in 1838. The biography was published in 1841.

[2] Or it may have been given in figures and 25 been mistaken for 15.

and was then twenty-six years of age, having been born in 1704, probably in the old manor house.[1] The 'idle, worthless boy,' as Macaulay describes him, did not at any rate commit any remarkable imprudence in his marriage.

But it is possible that circumstances connected with that event may have led to some misconstruction at the time, and some traditional stories thereafter. Hester Warren was the daughter of a Mr. Thomas Warren who owned the small estate of Stubbs Hill, in the parish of Twyning, in Gloucestershire. He was, it may be safely surmised, of a respectable yeoman family in that neighbourhood, and Hester seems to have had some money of her own which, after her untimely death, led to unpleasantness.[2] In what way she and Penyston became acquainted, where and when their confidences were exchanged, and how far their matrimonial intentions were communicated to either of their families, lies in complete obscurity. What is known is this: they were not married at Twyning, which would have been the usual course, but in the church of St. Andrew in the city of Worcester, situated at a considerable distance from Twyning. The entry in the register is as follows; '1730. July 30. The Rev. Mr. Penniston Hastings, of the parish of Dailsford in the county and diocese of

[1] One account says at Cornwell Manor.

[2] The social position of the Warrens may perhaps be gathered from the circumstance that another Thomas Warren, we may suppose the eldest brother of Hester, established a tea-garden at Stubbs Hill, the management of which gave cause for complaint. It seems that the Earl of Coventry of that day wrote to Warren Hastings, who thereupon settled an annuity of £100 on Thomas Warren on condition that he gave up the tea-garden. On the other hand, it has been stated that the Rev. John Warren, who was rector of Ripple in Worcestershire, and also Archdeacon of Worcester, was another brother of Hester. The present vicar of Twyning, the Rev. William Wordsworth Hoyland, has been good enough to supply information as to the Warrens. The certified copy of the entry in the register at St. Andrews', has been in the possession of the Hastings family since 1841.

Worcester, and Hester Warren, of Twinning in the county and diocese of Gloucester. Licence.' There is no hint of the presence of a relative on either side. Hester was of full age, rather younger than her bridegroom; she could do as she chose; but whether she acted with the consent of her father, who lived till 1745, or whether it was a runaway match, must be matter of conjecture. One thing is certain; the young couple went to live with the bridegroom's father, Penyston Hastings the elder, in the house which he rented at Churchill.

We come now to the second stage in the legend. If a boy of fifteen is foolish enough to marry, it is clear that he is likely to land himself in poverty. So Gleig, having committed himself to the figment of the immature marriage, proceeds to improve the occasion by describing the utter destitution and misery into which the rash couple fell. The readers of his pages might suppose that Hester gave birth to her renowned son in a doghole or a rabbit-hutch. Happily the public care of the Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, Lord Ducie, has caused a plate to be affixed to the house, commemorative of the birth. It is matter of eyesight that the house, though small, is respectable if not commodious; but it is believed on good grounds that it was something more. It seems pretty certain that, at the time of Warren Hastings' birth, the adjacent house formed with it one structure which has since been divided into two dwellings. It is a solid building of stone, and must have been a fit residence for a beneficed clergyman and his family. Gleig describes how the birth of Hester's son 'put an end to her own miseries'. What those miseries were he leaves us to conjecture. She was living in a comfortable house, under the protection of her husband and father-in-law, in circumstances that could not be called rich, but which certainly were nothing like abject poverty; probably much the same as those of the ordinary clergy, their neighbours. What is sad was the death of the young mother. Warren was born on December 6, and Hester

was buried on December 15, 1732. Sad too for the child. The greatest man of his race never knew a mother's care.[1]

The early years of Warren were passed in the village where he was born. The dame's school where he learned to read (it was the accustomed place for every one, gentle and simple, in those days) was in Churchill. What playmates he had must have been Churchill boys. It is not meant to suggest that he never saw Daylesford. The rector would be there on a Sunday to conduct the service, and his grandson, it may be supposed, would often accompany him. No doubt there would be other visits, perhaps many. The boy would know the place well enough, and be acquainted with its history and associations. Certainly he read in the churchyard the quaint inscription[2] on the tomb of his lineal ancestor, Simon

[1] Penyston Hastings the younger seems to have left Churchill soon after the death of his wife. It is believed that he went to the West Indies and died there. The only recorded observation made concerning him by his son seems to have been that he (Warren) had nothing satisfactory to say about his father. The only other child of the marriage, born in 1831, was a daughter, who married a Mr. Woodman, and has descendants.

With regard to Hester's money, mentioned above, a draft petition to the Lord Chancellor was prepared, apparently by authority of the Warrens, alleging that she was entitled to a sum of £500 out of a copyhold estate at Cheltenham, and also to some money from the will of a John Fletcher (one of her mother's family) and praying that her children should be protected in the matter. This draft is dated 1733. It does not seem to have been proceeded with.

[2] The inscription is as follows:—

Dost marvel, reader, that I here do lye
Who might have made this church my canopy?
Why, 'tis no wonder. Should a strong-built story
Hinder my corps in mounting to its glory?
My parting soul forbade it; and withall
Charged me to chuse this place of buriall,
That this my tomb each passenger might tell
They must expect the sound of passing bell.
Eightie two years compleat my days did make
Before my mother earth me home did take.

Hastings, and was shown the fine brass of a collateral relative in the chancel. His quick spirit would take it all in, and at the sight of Mr. Knight's square-built house, may well have burned with regret for the heritage of his fathers. But the tale he told in after years of his lying one summer day by a stream descending to join the Isis, and dreaming of the recovery of the estate, though true in itself, cannot be taken as Macaulay tells it. It was not a stream flowing through the domain of his ancestors, for there is no such stream in Daylesford. The incident must have taken place at Churchill, and the stream must have been the Evenlode. Just as fanciful is the pretty conjecture given by Macaulay at the conclusion of his *Essay* that on the very spot where the urn marking his coffin stands, 'the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, had played with the sons of ploughmen.' If he did, there was small harm in it, but he must have played with them at Churchill and not at Daylesford. The whole imagining is built on the idea that he lived in the parish where his grandfather was rector, which he did not; and is on a par with the odd notion that his grandfather did not find him suitable clothes and did not give him enough to eat. The boy did well as long as he stayed at Churchill, and when he left it for his education, his uncle Howard Hastings looked generously after the orphan.[1] These dramatic

And when her right in all mankind she leave
Heaven to the blest my purest earth receive.

Sir Charles Lawson erroneously states that Simon 'was buried in the church'.

[1] Not only so, but he provided for Warren in his will, proved in 1747, in which Howard is described as of St. James' Parish, Westminster. By this, *inter alia*, he leaves £20 a year to his father, Penyston Hastings; legacies to his aunt, Honour Hastings, daughter of the Hastings, who sold Daylesford, and to his sister Elizabeth Hastings; and then to his nephew Warren and his niece Ann, he leaves £2,000 South Sea annuities, Ann to give up to her brother her interest in the Plough Inn, Cheltenham, and the house adjoining. He also left £40 a year for the maintenance and education of Warren. In case Warren died without issue, Ann was made residuary legatee;

touches, which Macaulay could paint only too facilely, infect his *Essay* throughout with wild inaccuracy, and whisper strong suspicion of his real merits as an historian.

The dream of the recovery of Daylesford was destined to come true, though the dreamer went through as many tribulations as the patriarch of old before the augury was fulfilled. About three years after Warren Hastings finally

and failing her the two daughters of the late Harry Gardiner of Bremore, Hants (doubtless of the family of the Gardiner who married a daughter of Simon Hastings, and whose fine brass is to be seen in Daylesford church), and Anne, Mary and Eleanor Creswicke, daughters of Joseph Creswicke, of Stretham, Surrey, were entitled to the residue in equal parts. He recommends his nephew, Warren Hastings, to the care of his friend, the Hon. Henry Vane, and his niece Ann to that of Lady Grace. He appoints the Hon. Henry Vane, Henry Vane junior, Fairmedow Penyston of Cornwell, and Joseph Creswicke, his executors.

This will of Howard demolishes more than one mistaken statement. It shows that the condition of himself and his near relatives was not one of poverty, as represented by Gleig and Macaulay. It shows that Warren was not shipped off to India (as he was shortly after the will was proved) because he could not be maintained in England; but, probably, because Mr. Vane thought that the offer of a writership in the East India Company's service, obtained for him by Mr. Creswicke, was too good to be refused; an opinion which at any rate was abundantly justified by future events. The provisions of the will also suggest pretty clearly that Howard had no near male relative besides Warren. This was indeed the fact. His brother Penyston had vanished; and it is to be feared that the interest in the Cheltenham houses vanished with him. His brother Samuel, a Midshipman in the Royal Navy, of H.M.S. *Dursley*, had died in 1739 without issue, as is shown by letters of administration to his effects, granted to Howard. And his uncle, another Samuel, eldest son of the seller of Daylesford, died intestate and unmarried, in Jamaica, in 1718, as is proved by letters of administration granted to his brother, Howard's father, Penyston Hastings, Rector of Daylesford.

It may be observed that these last-mentioned letters of administration absolutely disprove the statement made by Sir Charles Lawson that this Samuel was the father of a William Hastings from whom Sir Charles deduces a genealogy. There was a William Hastings, of Milton-under-Wychwood, a hamlet of Shipton, but this William, as his will proves, died without issue, and his property at Milton passed to his widow.

returned from India, the manor and estate were bought for a sum under £12,000 from the grandson of the Mr. Knight who had built the square house, and thus returned for a time to the Hastings family. Of course the square house was speedily pulled down, and a mansion of a very different character arose in its stead. Warren Hastings left it on record that he spent on the property, counting in the purchase money, no less than £60,000. This of course included the building of the house. It was a sum quite disproportionate alike to the value of the estate and to the pecuniary resources of the purchaser. We have his own authority for the statement that he never, at any period of his life, was worth more than £100,000; yet he acknowledges that he spent more than half this amount in providing himself with a small manor, a mansion, park and grounds. As a fact, something like four-fifths of his fortune went in the costs of his defence during the Impeachment[1]; but the bounty of the East India Company, a bounty which assuredly had been fairly earned, relieved him from those embarrassments. It was well that he possessed so liberal a friend, for it is evident that he himself, accustomed to Oriental magnificence, and generously lavish by nature, had little knowledge of the value of money; while his wife, if no injustice has been done her by common report, had perhaps even less. However, it is well to know that the great Governor-General, the

[1] The impecuniosity under which he laboured soon after his acquittal may be measured by his reply to a friend who had urged him to go into the country for rest and quiet. He wrote back that he agreed with the advice but was so pressed for money that he feared he literally could not pay the expense of posting down to Daylesford. The East India Company proposed to grant him a pension of £5,000 a year, but this was opposed by Dundas, then head of the Board of Control, who was ill affected to Hastings. The proposal was then modified to a pension of £4,000 to commence from his resignation of the office of Governor-General. To this Dundas assented. As ten years had elapsed since his resignation, he obtained £40,000 at once, and the Company made him a loan of £50,000 without interest. This loan was in some part repaid, but the bulk of it was remitted.

statesman who preserved British India for his country, was able to live and die in honour on his ancestral domain; and it is only just to his memory to say that on the final, inevitable alienation and sale, Daylesford realized on the whole nearly what he had paid for and expended on it.

But it is not to be supposed that the place as it now exists is altogether the Daylesford of Warren Hastings. Visitors come and see, and imagine that his work lies before them. But much is changed, and that much includes what was most characteristically his. The fine façade of the house is virtually gone; the elevation, which commanded the admiration of young Denison in his *Letters*, has been dwarfed to about half its original height by the lofty terrace erected in its front. That has also obliterated the portico with its two grand pillars, and closed up the noble staircase which ascended from the outer hall. The present entrance, at the back of the house, is quite recent and comparatively poor. The terrace itself was erected in excellent taste, it displays a charming garden, and commands a fine view. There is no intention to criticize beyond saying that it had nothing to do with Warren Hastings, or with the original design of the mansion. It is an eyewitness who speaks, and he, sixty-six years since, approached Daylesford House by the drive which swept round where the terrace now stands, entered by the portal which the terrace now wholly obscures, and ascended to the reception rooms above by the staircase now made impossible.

In the days of Warren Hastings there were, on the first floor of the house, three reception rooms *en suite*, each rendered interesting to the intellectual or the curious by certain memorable things. The large room in the centre, commanding a view of the park and pleasure grounds, with the tower of Stow church in the distance, was the library. That on its right was the drawing-room, and the room on the left was the saloon. The drawing-room was occupied with the famous ivory furniture, carved by the

cunning hands of Indian artists, marvellous in the luxuriance and delicacy of its work, and upholstered in Eastern fabrics of surpassing tints. When this furniture was sold by public auction before the estate changed hands no single chair fetched less than ninety pounds, and the price of most of them ran towards a hundred. Some of them were purchased for Indian princes, and thus returned to their native land. Some quarter of a century ago a sofa of the set, with a small table, and another trifling piece, came into the market at Christie's, and were sold for fifteen hundred pounds in a single lot. The upholstering of the sofa still in a great measure retained its exquisite colouring. This furniture gave its peculiar Oriental stamp to Daylesford House, and was in unison with the history and the taste of its owner.

The library, a noble room more than forty feet in length, hung with Persian chain armour, set with silver, on its walls, with Zoffany's famous picture of the cock-fight at Lucknow, containing portraits of distinguished Anglo-Indians, over the mantelpiece, and a wealth of valuable books on its shelves, was the favourite and fitting apartment of a statesman who all his life had been a lover of literature, and had courted its charms even in the most arduous hours of his public rule. It was here he sat and read, here he conversed with his friends; and we shall presently give an example of the sort of conversation that fell from his lips; here, to his intellectual mind, was the room of the house, and among relics of Eastern days, with paintings and authors, he passed the tranquil years of declining life. That room, long since turned into a drawing-room by another taste, must ever remain, with those versed in the history of their country, dedicated to the immortal memory of Warren Hastings.

The saloon, to which perhaps a still deeper interest attached, a room of the same size as the drawing-room, had over the mantelpiece the portrait, we may call it famous, by Sir Thomas Lawrence. The engraving there-

from is probably more generally considered to reproduce the lineaments of the Governor-General than any other. But the idea is erroneous. Go to Lawrence's portraits for the picturesque, the artistic, the pleasing; but go elsewhere if you want a likeness. It was always felt by those who knew, that the face which looked down from the saloon wall, for all its dignity and repose, for all the imposing accompaniments of draping and shadow, was not 'the counterfeit presentment of the man'. It was from the brush of Thomas Lawrence, and that was enough to give it perpetual fame, but it was not the Hastings who had faced a mutinous Council, had shown himself a match for Hyder Ali, and had left the lasting impress of his intellect on the political relations of Hindustan. A more speaking likeness, taken no doubt with the advantage of a much earlier age, is that by Sir Joshua Reynolds; and it may be that the miniature which Mrs. Hastings always kept in her boudoir, and which appears as the frontispiece to Gleig's biography,[1] is the most pleasing. But if an expression of personal opinion be permitted, the unpretending picture by George Stubbs, painted and engraved by him in 1795, bears more than any other the stamp of a faithful realization of the man. The eye quick and observant, the mouth fixed in resolution, the face worn, 'but more through toil than age,' yet still flexible, and the whole air of quiet power and purpose, speak the character of Warren Hastings. But this is a diversion. The saloon contained several other paintings of considerable interest and merit; notably one hanging on the wall opposite to the entrance from the library, which represented an Indian hill fortress captured by the brilliant exploit of his favourite officer, Major Topham.

Under this picture took place the closing scene of an illustrious life. During his last illness, borne with signal fortitude, he was carried down to the saloon, where a bed had been prepared for him, probably for the purpose of more convenient nursing. The head of the bed was placed

[1] And is also the frontispiece to this book.

against the south wall of the room; and it was there that, honoured by the Crown, enrolled among its graduates by the first of Universities, and acclaimed by the House which had once impeached him,[1] the true founder of the British Indian polity gave up his soul to God.

In the autumn of 1814 a conversation took place at Daylesford which is given here on personal authority, because it seems illustrative of the subject with which we have been dealing. A young naval lieutenant passed through Chipping Norton, when posting down from Portsmouth into Worcestershire. The *Undaunted* frigate, of which he was first lieutenant, had lately taken Napoleon to Elba, and had arrived at Spithead to be paid off on the general peace. Lieutenant Hastings bethought himself that he was within a few miles of the most illustrious personage of his race, and he turned out of his way to pay his respects at Daylesford House. He was cordially received by Warren Hastings, whom he described as 'a little old man, with a black velvet cap on his head, sitting by the fire in his library'. A good deal of conversation ensued. Warren inquired with interest where the young lieutenant had served; and he, after narrating his experiences in the Mediterranean, not forgetting we may be sure his acquaintance with the Emperor, went on to say that he had also cruised in the Indian Ocean, and had been for some time surveying in the Persian Gulf. At the mention of that sea Warren Hastings became voluble. 'Ah!' he said, 'that is the most important position in Asia, one of the most important in the world.' And then, after a short pause,

[1] When the renewal of the East India Company's charter was under discussion in 1813, the House of Commons directed that Warren Hastings should attend at their Bar as a witness. On his doing so, the whole House rose, uncovered, and remained standing till he was seated. The same compliment was paid to him when he withdrew.

Soon after this he was sworn of the Privy Council by order of the Prince Regent, who received him in private audience. In 1814 the University of Oxford bestowed on him the honorary degree of D.C.L.

and raising himself in his chair, 'If I were the War Minister of the Czar I should not spend time and effort in striving to get to Constantinople by way of Europe; I should endeavour to occupy Persia, and to establish myself at the head of the Persian Gulf. I should then be in a fine position; I could strike at India with the one hand and at Asia Minor with the other; I should take Constantinople in the rear.' These words were uttered with remarkable animation and clearness, and with a conviction which showed that the great diplomatist and ruler had mastered the facts and thought out the subject. No more striking example, perhaps, could be given of the width of view and grasp of policy which distinguished the man. In his old age and retirement he could still survey the field of international politics and calculate the struggles for empire. The prescience of his statesmanship has been vindicated by the vigilance with which our Foreign Office has long watched and still watches over British interests in the mouth of the Persian Gulf.[1]

The history of the ancient church, which stood near one of the entrances to the park, has been already alluded to. But it may be well to record here the personal interest, the unremitting care, and we may add the excellent taste exhibited by Warren Hastings in his preservation of antiquity. The usual idea of clerical restorers seems to be the destruction of the old, and the glorification of the new. Ancient things are swept away in order to show how much better the things of the present can be made. The purpose of Warren Hastings was the reverse. His reverence for old things, the sanctity which in his eyes attached to a building

[1] The Lieutenant Hastings mentioned above, ran a distinguished career in the Royal Navy. When in command of the *Excellent* at Portsmouth he introduced into the Navy the scientific system of gunnery which has now been brought to such perfection. He was subsequently for ten years a member of the Board of Ordnance. It was as Admiral Sir Thomas Hastings, Knight Commander of the Bath, that in May, 1869, he narrated the account given above of his visit to Daylesford. This took place on the terrace of Barbourne House, near to Worcester



URN IN DAYLESFORD CHURCHYARD

Marking the spot where the remains of Warren Hastings lie.
Taken by Miss H. H. Holdich, Morristown, Jersey. U.S.A.

of a thousand years, forbade the alteration of a single feature, or the intrusion of one novelty. The church had become so ruinous by lapse of time that entire renovation was necessary, but it was resolved that it should be renovation and not destruction. Every stone was numbered as it was taken out, and was, wherever practicable, restored to its original position; if not practicable, one similar was inserted in its place. The old foundations were retained; the precise proportions and limits were scrupulously observed. The work was done with such careful piety that if Ethelwald, King of the Mercians, could have returned to earth, he would have found the scene of his devotion and munificence unimpaired. Warren Hastings drove down from his house daily in a pony carriage to observe the work in progress. When it was done he placed a tablet in the church inscribed as follows:—

'This church derives its foundation from a grant of Ethelwald, King of the Mercians, who reigned between the years of our Lord 716 and 757. Sanctified by the prayers, rites, and oblations of its successive parochial members through a period exceeding 1000 years, it was rebuilt with such of the same material as constituted its primitive structure, and had escaped the mouldering hand of time, with its identity unchanged: and the uniformity of its Saxon architecture, which had suffered some encroachment upon it from the license of incidental reparations, was restored in the year of our Lord 1816.

'"For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, and a watch in the night." Psl. xc. 4.'

This was the last work of Warren Hastings. It seems scarcely credible that it was swept away. In that respect, as in some others, the Daylesford of to-day is not the Daylesford of history.

